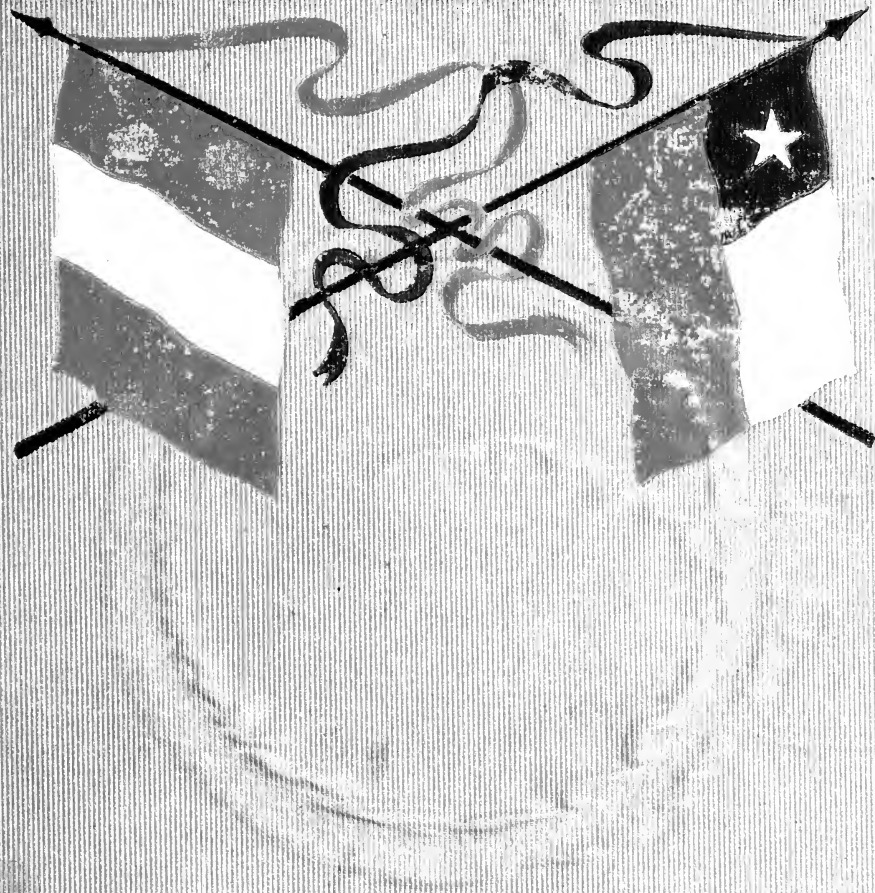
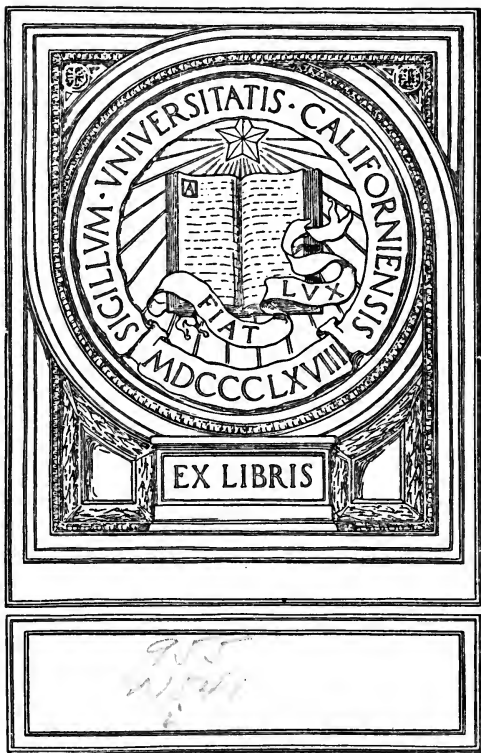


INCALAND



BY

CLAUDE H. WETMORE



Incaland





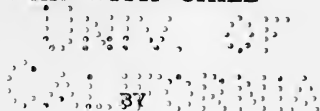


"He ran forward, closely followed by the others."

INCALAND

*A Story of Adventure in the Interior
of Peru*

AND THE CLOSING CHAPTERS OF THE
WAR WITH CHILE



CLAUDE H. WETMORE

AUTHOR OF "FIGHTING UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS," ETC.

With Illustrations by H. Burgess



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Preface.

SINCE the years of the Chile-Peruvian War — 1879–1883 — a great change has come over the land where the Incas once held power. Military rulers have yielded place to men chosen from the civil walks of life; the large standing army has been disbanded, and the pick, hoe, and shovel replace sword, bayonet, and rifle.

Peru's decline, from the days of Pizarro until near the close of the nineteenth century, was due to the ease with which natural wealth could be acquired. The stages of the nation's fall are marked by gold, guano, and nitrate of soda. Spaniards lived in opulence while Indian slaves unearthed the yellow metal. Later, Peruvians lived in idleness while coolies and peons shovelled the most productive of all fertilizers from the surface of the Chincha and Lobos Islands. Then in the south was found an equally rich and equally accessible source of revenue in the nitrate of soda.

All gold that lay in sight was exhausted by the Spaniard; all guano was stripped from the treasure islands; and finally, Chile wrested from Peru the nitrate provinces.

It is this period of time — when Peru's last visible

means of wealth was passing from her — that is covered in "Fighting under the Southern Cross" and "Incaland."

Peru emerged from beneath the war cloud staggering under the burden of a foreign debt. To her relief came representatives of an Anglo-American syndicate. "Give us your railroads for sixty-nine years," they said. "We will extend them into the fertile interior, and as compensation we will assume your obligations." Peru acquiesced. The Grace-Donoughmore contract was signed. Bondholders were satisfied.

The shackles of debt cast one side, the men of Peru turned to work, guided by the rulers chosen from civil life who had been placed in power. They no longer depended upon the labor of a few to maintain the majority in indolence.

They tunnelled and dug in the Sierra region and brought to light a wealth of copper; they sank wells in the north and were rewarded with flowing oil; they constructed irrigation canals in Piura Province, and developed a cotton which, because of its lustre and resemblance to wool, is creating a furore in the New York and Liverpool markets.

Gold, guano, nitrate, are the tombstones of old Peru; agriculture and mining are the watchwords of the new.

The dawn of a brighter day for Incaland is glinting over the Andean chain.

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INCALAND.



CHAPTER I.

IN THE ANDES.

HARVEY held some of the white substance in both hands, examined it curiously, then let it filter through his benumbed fingers.

"This is snow, isn't it?" he exclaimed.

Hope-Jones and Ferguson laughed.

"What! Have you never seen snow before?" asked the former.

"Of course not. Didn't I tell you that I visited the States only once, when I was little more than a baby, and remained but a month or two? I've never been in these regions any more than have you. I can remember rainfall, but snow! this is the first I have seen," and he stooped over again, scooping up a fresh handful of the white, fluffy flakes that had covered the ground to the depth of an inch.

"Look out!" screamed Hope-Jones.

Ferguson and Harvey jumped to one side, warned by the cry, not a second too soon, for a huge

boulder, roaring with the sound of an express train, bounded down the mountain side, crashed over the place where they had stood, and disappeared below the ledge, reverberating as it fell into the chasm.

“Narrow escape that!”

“I should say so,” said Harvey, who had dropped his snow and stood looking at the two young men, his cheeks quite pale.

The three who thus had barely escaped death were explorers from Callao, Peru, in the year 1879, and this day they were eight hours' walk beyond Chicla, the highest point to which the Oroya railroad had been built, and to which terminal they had journeyed by train from the main seacoast city of Peru.

Harvey Dartmoor was seventeen years of age, the birthday which marked his passage from sixteen having been celebrated a week before his departure from home. His father had been a wealthy iron merchant in Peru, but the reverses which that country had sustained in the few months of the war with Chile, and which are described in detail in “Fighting Under the Southern Cross,” had forced Mr. Dartmoor, as well as many others in Lima and Callao, to the brink of the financial precipice beneath which yawned the chasm, ruin.

Harvey had been more in the confidence of his father than Louis, who was a year older. This was perhaps due to the younger lad's resemblance to his

father, in face and in personal bearing ; or, perhaps, to the fact that he was more studiously inclined and therefore passed more time at home than did Louis, who was fond of outdoor sports, and preferred a spin in Callao Bay, or a dash over the pampas on his pony, with his chum Carl Saunders as a companion, to poring over books in the library.

It was in this manner — by being frequently at home and in the office — that Harvey had learned of his father's distress of mind, caused by financial difficulties, long before other members of the family had realized the true state of affairs ; and this observance by the lad and his inquiries had as a sequel his appearance in the great Andes chain, or the Cordilleras of Peru.

His companions were an Englishman and an American, who had resigned clerkships in offices to undertake this journey. Horace Hope-Jones, the senior, had been five years on the Peruvian coast, coming to Callao from Liverpool, and John Ferguson had lived in Ohio until 1875, when he was offered a very good salary to enter the employ of a large American house which had branch establishments in several cities on the southwest coast. One was twenty-three, the other twenty-two.

They were well known in the cities, and were popular in amateur athletic circles, both having been members of a famous four of the Callao Rowing

Club, that had wrested victory from fours sent from Valparaiso, Panama, and other cities. Harvey Dartmoor was a junior member of this club, and it was while serving as coxswain that he became acquainted with Hope-Jones and Ferguson.

It came about curiously that the three were in the Andes, at an altitude of 16,500 feet, this twenty-third day of August, 1879. Two days before they had stood on the beach at Callao, breakers of the Pacific Ocean dashing at their feet ; now they were in a wilderness of granite, snow-capped peaks rising on every side, and behind, towering above these, were still others, stretching in a seemingly endless chain.

Their quest in this vastness was gold, and an Indian's narrative caused their search for yellow metal in the interior, where the great Incas once ruled.

Hope-Jones and Ferguson had lived in bachelor apartments in Lima, which is eight miles from Callao, and for a year their wants had been attended to by an old native, named Huayno, who cooked their meals, made their beds and kept their rooms tidy.

He was singularly uncommunicative during the first eight months of his service, but later, falling ill and being treated kindly by the young men, he told them that he was of direct descent from the Incas ;

indeed, that there flowed through his veins blood of the royal Atahualpa, and that he might have been a king had not the race been first betrayed by the white men from Spain and then gradually exterminated, until only a few were left; and these wandered in bands through the interior, turned from a once proud people to Philistines, because of the injustice done them.

Thus old Huayno would talk evenings for hour after hour, speaking in Spanish with a strange mixture of the Indian tongue, and they would listen intently, because he told wonderful things of life in that portion of the interior to the north of Cerro de Pasco, where the foot of white man had never trod.

The Indian became worse instead of better, and finally was bedridden. Hope-Jones and Ferguson had grown much attached to him. They recognized a person above the station in which circumstances had placed him, and, moreover, they felt sorry for one who was far away from his people and so lonely. Therefore, instead of sending him to a hospital, they called a doctor and engaged a nurse to be near his side during the day, while they were absent at their offices. The physician shook his head, after examining the old man, and said : —

“He cannot linger long ; perhaps a week, possibly two, but no longer.”

Ten days later the end came, and a few hours before Huayno breathed his last, he beckoned Hope-Jones and Ferguson to his side.

“My masters, I know that I am about to die,” said he. “The sun of my life is setting in the hills and soon it will have disappeared. Before darkness comes I have much to tell you. In these weeks you have done much for me, as much as you would have done a brother ; and so I, in turn, shall do for you. Give me, I pray you, from that bottle, so the strength may come to my voice.”

One of them handed him a glass, into which he had poured some cordial, and the Indian drank slowly, then raised himself partly in bed, leaning on pillows which had been placed behind his back.

He was a tall, well-formed man, his skin of light copper color, and he wore a beard that reached half-way to his waist. His cheeks were much sunken and shrivelled, and resembled stained pieces of chamois skin that had been wet, then dried without stretching. His luminous black eyes glistened from deep cavities under shiny brows.

“I am of the tribe of Ayulis,” he continued, his voice much firmer. “They now inhabit the country round about the river Marañon, where they cultivate yacas, plantains, maize, and cotton, and from the latter the women weave gay cloths, so that their attire is of more splendid color than that of any tribe.

Eighty-five years ago it was not thus ; then we were not compelled to cultivate the fields, for having gold in abundance we employed others to work. That gold proved our curse, for the white men came from Spain and levied tribute upon us, more and more each year, until we knew that soon all would be taken away. They levied tribute which we were compelled to pay, but they never learned from where we secured the metal, although they searched in parties large and small and put many of our leading men to the torture, in effort to force the secret from them. An Ayulis has no fear of pain, and they laughed when burned with hot irons and when boiling oil was poured upon them.

“ When at last the Spaniards drove them too far, they choked the approaches to the mine with the trunks of huge trees, and all voiced a pledge that the place should never be opened again, nor would the location be made known to these unwelcome visitors from Spain. I am one hundred years old now ; I was twenty then, and I remember well the great meeting of our tribe. Later we were revenged. Six months from that day we joined forces with the Jivaros, and at night we entered the town of Logroño, where a terrible butchery befell. Every white man was beheaded and every woman was carried away. Then other white men came and we were hunted through the forests for years, until at

last we settled on the banks of the Marañon and there turned our attention to farming.

“We thought no more of gold, my masters, for that had been our curse; but well I remember the days when the yellow metal was in plenty, and with these eyes I have seen a nugget of gold taken from the mine of which I speak, that was as large as a horse’s head and weighed four arrobas.¹ Silver was so plentiful and iron so scarce that horses were shod with the white metal.

“Now I come to a time later by twenty years, when, by accident, I killed a man of our tribe. They would not believe me that I had meant him no harm, and that the arrow was not sped by design, but they declared that I should die. Had I been guilty I would have awaited the punishment; but I was innocent, and so I fled, and for a time I joined the savages on the Ucalayli, but in a few years I pushed on, over the mountains, to this coast where I have since been.”

Hope-Jones and Ferguson had listened breathlessly, bending forward, for the old Indian’s voice had grown weaker and weaker. Soon he added:—

“I will tell you where the gold mine lies, for you have been kind to me. Take paper and pencil, that you may write down what I may say and not forget.”

They did so, and he went on:—

¹ One hundred pounds.

“Cross the mountains to Oroya, go north even to Huari, all that way it is easy. From Huari go further north, three days on foot, to the great forest of cinchona trees, which commence at the sources of the upper Marañon. Enter this forest at Mirgoso, a village of few huts in my day, probably larger now. It is here that the Marañon properly commences. Follow the river, keeping in sight the right bank all the way. Travel six days by foot and you will suddenly see a great white rock. Beyond this once was a path, leading further north a half mile. Along it trees have been felled; they are rotted now. Push on and you will find the mine. Another — another — ”

They bent closer, for his breath was coming in spasms.

“Another white rock marks — ”

They sprang to his side; a strange rattle sounded in his throat.

“Lift me that I may see the setting sun.”

They did so and he looked out the window, toward Callao, where the ball of red was sinking. Then he fell back, dead.

For several days the young men said little concerning the Indian's story. They gave his body fitting burial in the little cemetery at Bella Vista, and returned to their work at office desks. It all seemed a dream to them; either they had dreamed

or they had listened to the ravings of Huayno. But after a week they commenced to discuss the narrative, first curiously, as one might talk of a fairy tale, then earnestly, as if their minds were becoming convinced that it had foundation in fact.

Why was it impossible? Were not legends heard from every tongue of the fabulous wealth of the Incas? Was it not said that they had secret mines, from which gold and silver had been taken, and which mines were closed and their bearings lost after the advent of the white man? Had there not been wonderful wealth in Cuzco? — a temple covered with sheets of gold and heaps of treasure? At Cajamaráca, did not Atahualpa offer Pizarro, as a ransom, sufficient gold to fill the apartment in which he was confined and twice that amount of silver?

There could be no reason for the Indian to deceive them; there was every reason why he should have told them the truth. Would it not be wise to go into the interior and investigate?

Nothing stood in the way. They had youth and strength, the journey would be of advantage physically; each had a small sum of money in bank and a portion of this would furnish everything they might need on the trip, leaving sufficient for emergencies upon their return, should they prove unsuccessful.

These arguments, advanced by one, then by the

other, determined them, and one evening Ferguson jumped up from his seat at table and exclaimed : —

“Let’s go !”

“Say we do,” answered Hope-Jones.

“Agreed ?”

“Agreed.”

“Shake on it.”

They clasped hands, and it was settled.

The very next afternoon they were discussing their plans in the dressing room of the Callao Rowing Club, when they were overheard by Harvey Dartmoor. He was not eavesdropping. Such was not his nature. They had not noticed his presence, and finally, when he attracted their attention, they were rather glad than otherwise that he had heard, and soon asked if he would like to join in the search.

Harvey was known in Callao as a student, and the young men believed that he would be of assistance when knowledge of geology and chemistry should be needed. Besides, he was a pleasant companion, and although their junior, he was in many things far advanced for one of his years. So it was decided that Harvey should accompany them, provided his father should give consent, and in the evening Hope-Jones visited John Dartmoor at his home in Chucuito and unfolded to him the strange sayings of the Indian, Huayno.

Mr. Dartmoor was at first reluctant to permit Har-

vey's departure. There was considerable danger in the trip — from avalanches, wild animals, and perhaps from savages, occasional bands of which were known at times to approach the Marañon River.

But in Hope-Jones and Ferguson he recognized young men of courage and determination ; he knew Harvey to have a similar nature, and beyond all that he looked at the possibility of finding this treasure.

John Dartmoor had seen nothing but darkness on all sides, and here was a glimmer of light. The depreciation of paper money and the stagnation of trade, because of war, had checked all business. He was confronted with obligations which he could not meet, and each night he dreaded the dawning of another day, lest it bring failure before darkness could come again. So at last he gave his consent, and Harvey, delighted, made his preparations for the journey.

The three decided to make no secret of the fact that they were going inland to seek gold, but to no one except John Dartmoor did they say aught concerning the Indian's revelations.

Having once interested himself in the venture, Mr. Dartmoor proved of valuable assistance to the travellers. Hope-Jones and Ferguson having shared their information with his son, he in turn furnished outfits complete for all three, and as his hardware store was the largest on the coast, he was able to find

nearly everything in stock. But the travellers, after frequent discussions, left behind far more than they first had planned to carry, for they appreciated the fact that before them lay mile after mile of mountain climbing.

When equipped for the journey, each was clad in a suit of heavy tweed, the trousers to the knee, gray woollen stockings, and walking shoes. Each carried a knapsack, surmounted by two thin blankets, shaped in a roll, and in each knapsack were the following articles: One light rubber coat, one pair of shoes, two pairs of stockings, one suit of underclothing, three pocket-handkerchiefs, one tin plate, one tin cup, knife and fork of steel, one pound of salt, one large box of matches, one tooth brush, one comb, needles, pins, and thread, one iron hammer, and one box containing two dozen quinine pills.

Ferguson and Hope-Jones each carried a pick, slung by cords over their shoulders, but Harvey was deemed too young to bear a similar burden; besides, two picks were plenty. Hope-Jones carried a shotgun, Ferguson a rifle, and Harvey a weapon similar to that borne by the Englishman, but of less weight. They all wore two ammunition belts, one around the waist, the other over the shoulder. In pockets were jack-knives, pieces of twine and lead pencils and paper, for they hoped to send letters from the interior to the coast by making use of native runners, although

once away from the railroad they could receive none.

Thus equipped, the departure was made from Lima on the morning of August 20, and the three adventurers were accompanied as far as Chosica by Harvey's brother Louis and by Carl Saunders, their chum, who stood on the railway platform in the little mountain town and waved a God-speed until the train pulled out of sight.

The Oroya railroad is one of the seven wonders of Peru, and no work by civil engineers in all the world so challenges admiration. It rises from the sea and threads the gorges of the Rimac, creeping on ledges that have been blasted from out the solid rock, crossing bridges that seem suspended in air, and boring through tunnels over which rest giant mountains. In places the cliffs on which rails are laid so overhang the river far below that a stone let fall from a car window will drop on the opposite side of the stream. From the coast to the summit there is not an inch of down grade, and in seventy-eight miles an altitude of 12,178 feet is attained. Sixty-three tunnels are passed through. Placed end to end they would be 21,000 feet in length, so that for four miles of this wonderful journey one is burrowing in the bowels of mountains.

At one point the travellers stood on the car platform and saw ahead of them the mouth of a tunnel,

then, looking up the face of the precipice they saw another black opening that seemed the size of a barrel ; higher still was a third, no larger in appearance than a silver dollar ; yet higher, as high as a bird would fly, a fourth, resembling the eye of a needle. Four tunnels, one above the other !

They would enter the first, wind around on ledges, pass through the second, wind again, the third, wind again, and before entering the fourth, look down from the train platform along the face of the precipice and see the entrances to the three holes through which they had passed. They were threading mountains, and always moving toward the summit.

In this wild journey they passed over thirty bridges that spanned chasms, the most remarkable of them all being the iron bridge of Verrugas, which crosses a chasm 580 feet wide and rests on three piers, the central one being 252 feet high.

The noonday meal was taken at Matucana, in the railway station house, and a half hour later they were on the way again, and all three stood on the platform of the rear car, watching the scenery, which every moment grew in grandeur. As the train wound around a ledge, like a huge iron snake, they saw far beneath a little lake of blue, bordered by willows. Even as they looked, clouds rolled out and hid the water and the willows. So they were above

the clouds ! Yet above them were other clouds, of fleecy white, drifting and breaking against the gray masses of stone that rose ever and ever at the sides of them and in front of them !

For a long time they were silent, looking down into chasms so deep they could not in places see the bottom ; at other points appeared a silver thread which they knew to be a river ; or, they gazed up at smooth cliffs, towering as if to shut out the sun, and again at huge overhanging boulders that seemed to need but a touch to drop and obliterate train and passengers. While thus watching, Hope-Jones suddenly exclaimed : —

“Where Andes, giant of the Western star,
Looks from his throne of clouds o’er half the world.”

“Who wrote those lines ?” asked Harvey.

“Campbell, I believe. I never appreciated them as I do now,” he replied.

They were soon joined by the conductor, who was much interested in the three adventurers. The road not having been constructed its entire length, it was seldom that passengers for the interior were on trains, and rarely indeed were met persons who intended journeying as far as did these three companions. Those who rode up the Oroya railroad were mainly tourists. So, in those years, the railway was operated at a loss ; but it was government property, and the purpose was

in time to connect the great interior with the seaboard.

The conductor was an American who had been five years in Peru, and he was always glad to meet any one from the States; so at once he fell into conversation with Ferguson.

"How often do you go over the road?" he was asked.

"Three times a week."

"Do you not tire of the solitude?"

"No. Each time I see new grandeur. Look over there. What is on that cliff?"

The three gazed in the direction he pointed.

"It seems to be a little animal about the size of a lamb," said Ferguson.

"It's an Andean bull."

"But, surely, how can that be?"

"Because the cliff, which seems only a few hundred feet away, is thousands. In this rarefied air all distances and sizes are misleading."

"What did this road cost?" Harvey asked.

"In money, no one knows exactly, unless it be the superintendent of public construction at Lima. Henry Meiggs took the contract in 1868 for \$27,000,000, but the government has added many million dollars since then."

"You say in money. What other cost has there been?"

"Lives of men, my son. The line is not completed, yet seven thousand men have perished during its construction. They say that for every tie on the railroad across the Isthmus of Panama a man gave his life, but even that road has no such death list on the dark side of its ledger as has this."

"That is more than double the number of the killed on both sides at the battle of Shiloh!" exclaimed Harvey.

"Yes ; if I remember my history aright," assented the conductor.

"What caused this frightful mortality?" asked Hope-Jones.

"There have been many causes, sir. Extremes of climate have affected those with weak constitutions and rendered them easy victims to disease, pestilences have raged in the camps, and there have been hundreds of fatal accidents, due to blasting and to the fall of boulders. I dare say that if one could find a passage along the Rimac below," and he pointed to the chasm, "he would see whitened bones between every mile post."

That evening they reached Chicla, 15,645 feet above sea level, and were entertained at the home of the railroad superintendent, who had charge of the upper division of the line. Chicla is a little town of huts nestling in a small valley and surrounded by mountain peaks. The nights are always cold, and

for only a few hours during the day does the sun's face escape from behind the towering peaks and shine upon the village.

At the supper table Harvey complained of a drumming in his ears, and a few minutes later he hastily left the table because of a severe nosebleed. Ferguson felt something damp on his cheek not long after, and using a handkerchief he noticed that it bore a crimson streak. Blood was flowing from his right ear.

The superintendent assured them that there was no cause for alarm, and that every one suffered from the effects of rarefied air when coming into a high altitude.

"The pressure is less on the body up here," he explained, "but within your veins and cells is air at the pressure received at sea level. This over-pressure air, in endeavoring to escape, forces the blood with it. In a few hours the symptoms will have passed away. None of you has heart trouble, I trust?"

"No," they answered.

"Then you will soon be all right."

They passed a restless night, but in the morning felt much better, and viewed from the veranda of the house the coming of the day without a rising sun in sight, for, the superintendent explained, it would be ten o'clock before the rays would shine

from over the mountain peaks in the east. The valley was soon filled with a mellow light, and on the western hills rested a shadow that slowly crept downwards.

After breakfast they watched from the veranda a train of llamas coming down the mountain side, bearing panniers filled with silver ore.

"Those are wonderful beasts," said the superintendent.

"Yes," remarked Hope-Jones; then he added: "Until recently, I believed they belonged to the same family as the domestic sheep of Europe and North America, but I ascertained by reading that they are more closely allied to the camel."

"So I have heard, and so examination would convince even one not versed in natural history. They are much larger than sheep, are powerful and more intelligent; besides, they can go for a long time without water and endure as heavy burdens as a mule."

"I understand that their flesh is good to eat."

"Yes, it is quite palatable. So the llama is valuable for three purposes — as a beast of burden, for its long, silken wool, and for its flesh."

An hour later Hope-Jones, Ferguson, and Harvey bade the superintendent good-by, after thanking him for his hospitality, and started on their journey to the northeast. While in Chicla they had secured

canvas for a shelter-tent. It was unnecessary to carry poles, because these could be cut each evening; and the additional burden, divided among the three, was not heavy.

The first day's travel was uneventful until toward sundown, when snow commenced to fall, and Harvey for the first time saw the crystal flakes beneath his feet, and swirling through the air. They had attained quite an altitude above Chicla, how much higher they did not know, not having brought instruments. But in the morning they would commence to descend again to the region of the Montaña, the great table-land valley of Peru which lies between two parallel spurs of the Andes at an altitude of six thousand to eight thousand feet — a valley rich with forests and with smaller vegetation, a valley through which flows the river Marañon, and is inhabited by the Ayulis Indians; and in this valley somewhere on the river Marañon, was a great white rock that marked a nature's storehouse of gold.

They pitched their shelter-tent, lighted a fire, and ate a hearty supper of food they had carried from Chicla; then, after talking for an hour, they went to sleep, lying close together, wrapped in both blankets, for the night was cold.

CHAPTER II.

THE MONTAÑA OF PERU.

EARLY next morning the three adventurers were awakened by a mournful cry. A long, shrill note sounded near the shelter-tent and was followed by three others, each deepening in tone. They sat up and rubbed their eyes, then looked at one another, as if to ask, "What is that?"

Again the long, shrill note, and again the three mournful echoes, each deeper than the one preceding.

"What a ghostly noise!" said Hope-Jones.

"Oh, I know what it is!" exclaimed Harvey, rising, his face brighter. "It's the alma perdida."

"Alma perdida! That's the Spanish for 'lost soul.'"

"Exactly. That's why the bird has such a name, because of its cry. It's an alma perdida—a bird, that is piping so dolefully. Come, see if I am not correct."

He pushed aside the flap of the shelter-tent, sprang without, and was followed by the young men. In the light of early day they saw a little brown bird,

a tuft of red on its head, perched on a scrub bush, not a hundred yards away. Even as they looked the shrill note was repeated, and then the doleful ones of deeper sound.

“Shoo!” said Ferguson; and as the bird remained perched on the bush, he threw a stone. The red-tufted body of brown rose from the branch and disappeared.

“‘Good riddance to bad rubbish,’” said Ferguson. “We don’t want any such croakers at our feast; which, by the way, reminds me of breakfast.”

“Whew!” exclaimed Harvey. “It’s cold!”

Indeed it was cold for these travellers from the warm coast-belt, the mercury standing at about thirty-five degrees Fahrenheit.

“Let’s run and get wood for a fire, then we’ll feel warmer,” said Hope-Jones. “There’s a dwarf tree over there. Surely some dry branches are beneath it. Now for a two hundred yards’ dash! One! two! three!”

Ferguson won, Hope-Jones second, and Harvey a close third. The run started their blood well in circulation, and they fell to gathering chips of bark and dried twigs with a will, returning to the tent each with an armful. They placed four stones equidistant from a centre, so that a few inches were between them, and in the spaces piled the wood.

“Be careful with the matches!” said Ferguson.

“Only one for a fire. Harvey, take from your box first.”

The boy stooped over and the two young men stood to the windward of him, forming a shield. In a few seconds a crackle was heard, then a thin line of blue smoke rose from between the stones, and tongues of flame licked the pieces of granite.

“More wood !”

It was added, and in a minute a merry blaze was burning briskly.

They held their hands over the flames, and they stood on the leeward side, not minding the smoke which blew in their eyes, for the heat was carried to their bodies, dispelling the chill that had come after the run. Although the morning was somewhat warmer than had been the evening before, it was still very cold for these residents of the sandy coast-line. Here and there patches of snow still lay on the ground, but the white crystals were fast melting under the glow of coming day. The sun was not so tardy here as at Chicla, for no high peaks were in the east, and even as they stood around the fire a shaft of light was thrown across the valley in which they had rested during the night.

“What shall we have for breakfast?” asked Hope-Jones.

“Fried bacon and corn bread,” promptly answered Ferguson.

"But how shall we cook the bacon?" asked Harvey.

"I'll show you;" and the Ohioan unstrapped his knapsack and took therefrom his tin plate, which he placed on the four stones.

"How's that for a frying pan!"

They had taken certain provisions from Chicla, because the superintendent said it might be a couple of days before they could reach that part of the Montaña where game abounded, and the carrying of these edibles had devolved upon Harvey, his companions having burdened themselves with the canvas of the shelter-tent. Another minute, and a fragrant odor came from the dish that was resting over the flame.

"I wish the corn bread could be made hot," said Harvey, as he proceeded with the further opening of his knapsack.

"It will be—in a jiffy," was the reply. "Just clear away some of the fire on the other side."

This was done, the sticks and embers being pushed back, and Ferguson commenced with his jack-knife, hollowing out a space in the thin soil. Taking Hope-Jones's and Harvey's tin plates, he placed the bread between them, then laying them in the shallow excavation, rims together, he raked over some earth and on top of this a layer of hot coals.

"By the time the bacon is cooked our bread will be ready," he added.

While this was being done Hope-Jones had visited a little spring near by and had filled their cups with sparkling water. Ten minutes later they were seated around the fire, enjoying the breakfast, and all agreed that they had never tasted a more appetizing meal.

By half-past seven dishes were washed, the tent taken down, knapsacks and bundles packed, and they started, with a compass as a guide, toward the northeast, between two mountain peaks — for in that direction lay the Montaña. It was easy walking, llama trains having made a pathway, and the country soon became more regular, for they had passed the region of gorges, precipices, and chasms ; although still among the mountains, the high peaks towered behind, those in front becoming lower as they progressed.

They were travelling a down grade, and as they pushed on there were continual signs of change in the vegetable world. At the point where they had encamped for the night grew only a few shrubs and dwarf trees, whose gnarled branches told of a rigorous climate. But soon cacti thrust their ungainly shapes above ground, the trees became of larger size, and a long grass commenced to appear. And as above they had walked upon a gravel, which had crumbled from the rocky mountain side, so further down appeared a soil richer in alluvium as they pro-

ceeded. By eleven o'clock all the towering mountain peaks were behind them. They were nearing the table-land country and were among the foothills of the first spurs of the eastern slope.

"O for a luncheon with potato salad!" exclaimed Harvey.

"Sighing for potatoes in Peru is like sighing for coals in Newcastle," said Hope-Jones.

"Why so?"

"Because Peru is the home of the potato. It was first discovered here. Didn't you know that?"

"Yes, but I had forgotten it for the moment. One is so accustomed to terming them 'Irish potatoes.'"

"Who discovered the vegetable in Peru?" asked Ferguson.

"The Spaniards, in the seventeenth century. Large tracts of land in the Montaña country were covered with potato fields, and the Indians could not recall when they had not formed a staple of diet."

"How did the term Irish potato originate?"

"Sir Walter Raleigh is responsible for that, I believe. The potato was planted on his estate near Cork and flourished better in that soil than in any other of Europe."

The noon hour having arrived and the conversation tending to increase their hunger, the three adventurers looked about for a spring, and in the

distance seeing a clump of willows and verdure of unusual brightness, they hastened to the spot and found a little mountain stream rippling over pebbles. As they approached a number of parakeets flew away, chattering, their brilliant plumage causing them to appear as rainbow darts above their heads.

“An ideal spot !” said Hope-Jones.

“And here’s shade. We didn’t want shade this morning, did we ?”

“Hardly. But the day has grown warm.”

While speaking they cast knapsacks and burdens one side and threw themselves down on the grass for a brief rest before preparing the noonday meal. The murmur of the brook had as an accompaniment the hum of insects and the piping of finches — for they were nearing the table-land, which pulsed with life ; far different from the drear of the early morning, which was punctuated only by the doleful notes of the *alma perdida*.

“I can almost think myself in an American harvest field,” said Ferguson, rolling on his back and clasping his hands over his head.

Hope-Jones placed a blade of coarse grass between his thumbs, held parallel, then blew upon the green strand with all his might.

“What on earth is that ?” exclaimed Ferguson, jumping to his feet, and Harvey came running from the stream.

"You said something about a harvest field, so I stood in the kitchen door and sounded the horn for dinner," was the laughing response.

"What shall it be?"

"The same as this morning, with the addition of hard-boiled eggs; that is, providing Harvey hasn't broken the eggs."

"Indeed, I haven't," protested the boy, and he commenced to unstrap his knapsack.

A fire was soon started and the eggs were placed over the flame in a large tin cup. After being thoroughly boiled, they were put in the stream to cool, and bacon was fried as in the morning; but the corn bread was eaten cold, "by way of a variety," so Ferguson said.

"I hope we may find some game this afternoon," said Harvey, as he cracked an egg-shell on his heel.

"We undoubtedly shall, for it cannot be far to the Montaña proper."

An hour later they resumed their burdens, and with swinging steps continued on down the hillside. The grass became more profuse, and soon formed a velvet carpet under the feet. It was dotted with the chilca plant, which bears a bright yellow flower, of the same color as the North American dandelion; and in places could be seen the mutisia acuminata, with beautiful orange and red flowers, and bushes that bore clusters of red berries.

"The landscape is becoming gorgeous," said Hope-Jones.

Trees were now larger, and vines of the semi-tropics clung to the trunks and to the branches. Little streams were of frequency, all running toward the east instead of to the west, as had been observed when on the other side of the cordillera; and so, late in the afternoon, the sun commenced to go down behind the hills, which seemed strange to those who were accustomed to see it sink in the ocean.

"Sh!" exclaimed Hope-Jones, suddenly, then—"Drop down, fellows!"

They sank into the grass.

"What is it?" asked Harvey.

"Look over there, in that clump of trees."

They saw something moving under the branches, then a form stood still.

"It's a deer. I suppose it's the Peruvian taruco. Can you bring it down at this distance, Ferguson? If we go nearer, we shall probably see our supper bound away."

"I'll try, but it's a good range; almost six hundred yards, don't you think?"

"All of that."

"Then I'll adjust the sights for seven hundred."

He threw himself flat on the grass, pushed his rifle before him, resting the barrel on a stone, took aim

for a minute, then fired. The deer sprang into the open, gave a second bound, rising from all four hoofs, and, twisting convulsively, fell dead.

"Bravo ! At the first shot !" yelled Hope-Jones, and jumping up, he ran forward, closely followed by the others.

"What shall we do now ?" asked Harvey.

"Fortunately I hunted quite a little when a lad in the States," said Ferguson, whipping out a long knife and cutting the animal's throat. "In a half hour we can skin it," he added.

"Say, fellows, I have an idea. What better place can we camp than here ?" asked Hope-Jones.

They were near a grove of tall trees, the bark of which was white, and in marked contrast with the dense green foliage. These were the palo de sangre, or blood-wood of the upper Marañon, from which is taken timber of a red color that is fine-grained, hard, and receives a good polish. The trees were not many in number, but they arched over a little brook, and tall grass grew between the trunks.

"It's a splendid spot," replied Ferguson, "and I have another plan to add as an amendment to yours."

"What's that ?"

"To remain here all to-morrow."

"And lose a day ?"

"No ; I think we should gain thereby. I confess that I'm dead tired. The first day's tramp always

tells the most. Besides, we had a wearisome trip on the railroad, and for a week before leaving Callao we were continually on the jump. So a day's rest from tramping will do us all good; but I don't mean to idle away the time, for we can find plenty to do."

"What, for instance?"

"Cut up that deer and smoke some strips of the flesh to carry with us. We may not always be so lucky, and smoked venison isn't at all bad when one's hungry."

The amendment was accepted, and they at once went into camp.

It lacked two hours of sundown. The air was pleasant and warm, and the sweet odor from flowers was carried to their nostrils by a light breeze. Hope-Jones cleared a space for the tent and cut props for the canvas. Harvey fetched water from the brook and gathered firewood; and Ferguson, rolling up his sleeves, commenced to skin the deer, then cut a large steak from the loin. In an hour a bed of live coals was glowing, and, using a ramrod for a spit, the Ohioan commenced to broil the venison. Soon savory odors rose, and Hope-Jones and Harvey stood quite near, smacking their lips.

"This is the best dinner I ever ate in my life," said the boy fifteen minutes later, as he sat on the log of a tree, his tin dish between his knees.

They crawled into the shelter-tent early that even-

ing, right glad to rest, and the two young men were soon in dreamland. But Harvey tossed about uneasily and his eyes refused to close ; he was too tired to sleep. For a long time he lay awake, listening to the monotonous notes of the yucahualpa, which sings only at night, and at last, the tent becoming oppressive, he took his blankets and stole quietly without. It was bright with starlight, but there was no moon. A breeze from the west moved the broad leaves of the blood-wood trees, and the sound of their rustling was like the roar of breakers on a distant beach.

The boy stepped to a fallen tree, from the trunk of which branches protruded, but the leaves were gone. Wrapping one blanket completely around him, he lay down, his head resting in a fork several inches above the ground ; then he drew the other blanket over him and the next minute was asleep.

CHAPTER III.

A SNAKE AND A PUMA.

“WHERE’S Harvey?”

Hope-Jones, aroused by Ferguson, rose to an upright position and looked around. The flap of the shelter-tent had been thrown back, and the gray light of early morning was stealing in.

“Not here? Perhaps he has gone to the brook.”

“Yes; probably for a bath. I guess I’ll follow him.”

They lazily drew on their knickerbockers, laced their shoes, and went outside, yawning as they stepped on the grass, for the sleep was still in their eyes. The next instant their attitude changed—from heavy with drowsiness every sense became alert, every muscle contracted and their nerves throbbed, their cheeks from red turned ashen pale. For Ferguson had clutched Hope-Jones’s arm and had whispered, “Look!”

A hundred yards from where they stood lay Harvey, sound asleep, his head resting in the fork of a fallen tree and his face upturned. Two feet above

this upturned face—a handsome, manly face—something was waving to and fro like a naked branch throbbled by the wind; only this something moved with a more undulating motion. It was a snake. The body was coiled around the limb of the tree that rose from the fork, and the flat head and neck waved at right angles.

“Sh! It may strike if alarmed!”

Both men sank to their knees.

“What’s it waiting for?” whispered Hope-Jones.

“I don’t know.”

“What can we do? Shall I risk a shot?”

“No. Your gun would scatter and perhaps hit Harvey. We must try the rifle.”

“You do it, then. I never could hit that target.”

“I’ll try,” said Ferguson, clenching his teeth; and he crawled quickly into the tent, and, returning with the weapon, threw himself flat on the grass in the position he had taken the evening before while aiming at the deer.

The light had grown, so that twigs on trees stood out plainly. They could see that the snake was of a brown-green, the head very flat, and in and out between the jaws moved a thin tongue, vibrating as does a tightly stretched string that has been pulled with the fingers.

“Why don’t you fire?” whispered Hope-Jones, who had thrown himself down beside Ferguson.

“Wait. I can’t hit that. No one could.”

The day was growing fast. Harvey slept without moving, and above his face, no nearer and no farther away, moved the flat head with pendulum-like regularity.

All at once, a ray of light glanced from the rising sun through the trees and fell on the face of the sleeping boy — a line of golden light, reaching from forehead to chin. Harvey moved. That instant, the flat head ceased swaying, the portion of the body free from the tree arched itself like the neck of a swan and the snake was immovable, poised to strike. But before the fangs could be plunged into the victim, a rifle rang out, and the snake fell forward, writhing, upon the neck and shoulders of the boy, and he, at a bound, freed himself from the blankets and started for the woods on a run, yelling: “I’m shot! I’m shot!”

Hope-Jones and Ferguson followed and caught up with him at the edge of the brook. Beads of perspiration were standing out on his forehead, and his face was pale.

“Where are you hurt, Harvey?” asked Ferguson, anxiously.

He looked at them in amazement, for as a fact he had just awakened. The yell and the exclamation were only part of a nightmare, which had been caused by the discharge of the firearm.

Meanwhile Hope-Jones was feeling of him carefully, his arms, his body, and examining his head and neck.

"He's as sound as a dollar," he finally said.

"Of course I am," Harvey replied rather sheepishly. "What's all the row about, anyway?"

"Come, we'll show you," and the young men led him back to the tree and pointed to the dead snake.

Harvey did not understand even then what the scene meant. He saw his blankets lying to one side, where he had tossed them, and he saw the reptile in the place where he had slept. Then Hope-Jones related what had happened, and the lad turned pale again when the Englishman ended by saying:—

"Had not Ferguson's aim been true you would be a dead boy, because I can recognize this snake as of a poisonous species, although I do not know the name."

He turned the broad head over, and it was seen that the rifle bullet had entered the mouth and shattered the upper fang.

Harvey was silent for several minutes while Ferguson stooped over and measured the reptile, announcing that it was seven feet two inches long; then the boy said:—

"I can never, never find words to thank you."

"Don't mention that, Harvey," was the reply,

“but remember and keep with us at night. We’re in a strange land now, and there’s no telling what we may meet.”

“I suppose we have all been careless,” said Hope-Jones. “Back in the sierra there was no animal life, except the llama and a few goats; we are in the Montaña now and it’s different. However, let’s change the subject and have breakfast.”

The fire was lighted, another venison steak was cooked, and with it they ate the last of the corn bread. After breakfast Ferguson set to work on the deer, cutting the flesh into strips, and while he was doing this Hope-Jones and Harvey, following his direction, built a little smoke-house with three boughs and started a slow fire within. Later the strips of flesh were hung on pieces of twine that had been stretched across the top, and the place was closed, except for a small opening, through which the fire could be replenished during the day. After this the three went to the brook side and washed such clothing as was necessary, which was hung on bushes to dry.

The noonday meal consisted of fried eggs and cold venison; then, after tending the fire in the smoke-house once more, the three lay down for a siesta. The afternoon was quite warm, the drone of insects could be heard, and they had a refreshing sleep for two hours.

But the sun was not to set without further adventure, which, like that of the morning, brought in its train a lesson to the three who were unaccustomed to the wilds of the Peruvian interior. Harvey, who was the first to awaken, believed that he might find some wild fruit in a clump of trees which grew about a quarter of a mile to the east, and so he left the camp at three o'clock and soon crossed the open space. He found himself in a little grove, the size of that in which the tent was pitched. But the trees, which had appeared different at a distance, were the same, and, disappointed, he was about to return, when his attention was attracted by a purring sound, like that made by kittens when their backs are stroked; and looking down he saw, almost beneath his feet, three little animals that were at play, catching each other with their paws by the tails and ears, and rolling over and over. They were not much taller than kittens, but were more plump, and their bodies were broader. The hair was a brownish yellow, spotted with brown of a deeper tint, and their little tails were ringed with the same color.

The boy watched them a few minutes, then thinking what a surprise he could give Hope-Jones and Ferguson, he lifted one in his arms. It was quite heavy and gave forth a peculiar whine when taken from its companions. Harvey held it close and started back to the camp, walking briskly.

He had gone about a hundred yards when there came from behind him a hideous howl that made his heart jump into his throat and his hair stand on end, while chill after chill passed down his spinal column. Glancing over his shoulder he saw an animal bounding after him, mouth wide open and foam dropping from yellow fangs. It was the size of a lion. Giving a scream, the boy started toward camp at a speed he had never equalled. For a few seconds he was so dizzy from fright that he seemed to be floating in air. Every muscle was stretched to its utmost, and he bent far forward, calling at the top of his voice, in the hope that his companions might hear.

Another awful howl sounded, this time nearer, and he could hear the footfalls of the animal close behind; the next second he could hear it panting, and then, just as he felt that the next breath would be his last, reason came to him, and he dropped the little animal which, without thinking, he had held tight in his arms.

The instant he did so the footfalls ceased and the panting grew less distinct. He cast a swift glance over his shoulder and saw that the animal had stopped beside her cub and was walking round and round the little yellow creature and licking it. The sight gave him hope, and he ran on toward the camp, ran as he had not even when that terrible breathing was so close, for then fear had partly benumbed him and at times he had staggered.

He was halfway between the groves when the animal's cry sounded again and acted on him like the spur on a horse. He glanced back. The creature had left her cub.

"Perhaps she thinks I have another one of her pups," was the thought that flashed through Harvey's mind, and the inspiration came to dash his hat to the ground, which he did, and a few seconds later he looked back over his shoulder once more. Yes, the animal had stopped, but only for an instant, to sniff the piece of woollen, and then had bounded forward.

The boy plainly saw the tent ahead, but he could not make out the figure of a person near the canvas. Where were Hope-Jones and Ferguson? Could he reach the grove? But of what use to do so, unless they were there to aid him? His heart beat wildly; perspiration flooded his face and stood out in cold beads; he felt cold all over, although he was running at a speed that should have given him fever heat, and the day was very warm.

At that instant a man appeared near the tent, and Harvey gave a yell such as he had never uttered. The man stood out plainly in the afternoon light, and Harvey saw him turn. Simultaneously he heard the footfalls of the animal and the hoarse panting. The grove was near, the tent was near, the man was near, and he was immediately joined

by another. They were waving to him. What could they mean?

It was a signal, but he did not understand. The heavy breathing came nearer and nearer. The men were running toward him, throwing their hands out to the left. All at once he understood, and he darted to one side. The second after he did so the crash of a rifle rang out, then the deeper sound of a shot-gun.

When Harvey looked up again Hope-Jones was pouring water on his head and Ferguson was saying : —

“It’s a puma and of the largest size !”

“Well, young man, have you had enough adventures for one day?” asked the Englishman, when the boy sat upright.

“I guess I have,” he replied in a somewhat dazed voice.

“You tackled quite a contract over there,” said Ferguson. “How did it happen?”

Harvey told them, stopping now and then during the narrative, for he was not yet wholly over his fear, nor had he quite recovered his breath.

“I guess you will keep close to us in the daytime as well as at night,” said Ferguson, when he had finished.

“Yes, I think I shall,” the lad said somewhat dismally. “What was it you said chased me?”

“A puma of the largest species. Do you wish to see it?” and Ferguson led the way a few steps to the right where the carcass of the animal lay in the long grass.

Its legs were drawn up close to the body, proof that it had died in a convulsion, and Harvey shuddered as he looked at the long, sharp claws that protruded from soft, spongelike feet. These were the feet he had heard striking the ground in pursuit. The puma somewhat resembled a leopard, and measured forty-five inches from the nose to the root of the tail, and the tail was as long as the body. The head was rather small, the ears large and rounded. The skin was a tawny, yellowish brown, and the lower part of the body a dirty white.

“Ugh!” exclaimed Harvey, shuddering.

They walked back to camp. After supper Ferguson said :—

“I move we adopt a couple of rules, to apply for the remainder of the journey.”

“What are they?” asked Hope-Jones.

“First, that we keep within hailing distance of one another.

“Second, that one of us always has a gun in hand.”

“Agreed,” said the Englishman, and Harvey nodded his head in approval.

CHAPTER IV.

IN THE COILS OF A BOA.

“CROSS the mountains to Oroya, then go north to Huari, and in three days you will reach the great forest of cinchona trees,” repeated Hope-Jones, quoting old Huayno.

“Yes, but we have gone around Oroya, as advised by the superintendent,” said Ferguson.

“That’s why we have kept a northeast instead of a north course.”

“We should sight Huari to-morrow.”

“Yes. We should.”

It was the fifth day of their journey from Chicla, and they were plodding along in a rain, rubber coats buttoned close to the chin. The llama path was very narrow and wound in and out among tropic verdure. Everything was dripping with moisture, large drops rolling from palm leaves, bushes throwing spray as they were released after being pushed one side by the pedestrians, and the long grass wound

around their stockings until they became wringing wet. It had been impossible to light a fire at noon, and so they had dined on strips of smoked venison.

"We must find some dry wood to-night and hang our clothing near a blaze," said Harvey. The next minute he had darted ahead, then to one side.

"Remember rule number one!" called out Ferguson.

"All right," came back the answer.

They caught up with the lad in a minute, and found him standing under a clump of trees that were about fifteen feet in height and which had broad, flat tops. As they neared the spot a fragrance as of incense was borne to their nostrils through the rain.

"Here's a feast after all the dried deer meat!" called the boy, who had hung his knapsack on a branch, placed his shot-gun against the trunk of the tree, and was already climbing.

"What is he after?" asked Hope-Jones.

"I'm sure I don't know. What have you found, Harvey?" called Ferguson.

"Chirimoyas."

"Then we're in luck. My mouth waters at the very thought of the fruit. But I never saw the tree before," he said, looking up at their young companion.

"The trees grow in plenty of places near Lima," Harvey replied. "I recognized them at once from a distance. Here, catch!"

The fruit he dropped down was heart-shaped, green, and covered with black knobs and scales, much as is a pineapple, and was about two-thirds the size of the latter.

When Harvey had detached a half dozen he descended, and despite the inclement weather they sat down for a feast, this being the first of fruit or fresh vegetable they had tasted since leaving Chila.

Although it was damp no rain fell on the place where they rested, for the broad leaves of the trees were so interlaced as to form a natural umbrella that made a perfect watershed.

The skin of the chirimoya is thick and tough, and their jack-knives were called into use, but once within the shell a treat indeed was found. Internally the fruit is snowy white and juicy, and embedded within the pulp are many seeds, but these are as easily removed as are the seeds of a watermelon.

"My, this is delicious!" said Harvey, smacking his lips.

"Picking chirimoyas from trees is better sport than picking up puma cubs from beneath them, is it not?" asked Hope-Jones.

"Somewhat," said the lad, as he buried his face in

the fruit and took so large a mouthful that his cheeks were distended.

"Be careful lest you choke," warned Hope-Jones; then turning to Ferguson he asked : —

"How would you describe the flavor should you wish to do so to a person at home?"

"I couldn't. It is finer than the pineapple, more luscious than the best strawberry, and richer than the peach. There is no fruit with which I could make comparison. Can you think of any?"

"No."

They enjoyed the repast with which nature had provided them, then Ferguson urged that they take up their march again.

"What's the matter with remaining here?" Harvey asked.

"It's too damp. We all would have colds in the morning. No, we must find a dry spot, even if we have to keep going till late at night. As it is, perhaps we had better each take a couple of quinine pills. Here, I will stand treat," and he commenced to unstrap his knapsack.

"Chirimoyas for the first course and quinine for the second," remarked Harvey. "Who wouldn't call that a genuine Peruvian meal?"

Then they resumed their way in the rain, which continued falling heavily, dripping from the trees overhead.

Since morning they had been descending into a valley that was lower than any part of the Montaña which they had as yet traversed ; indeed, they were at an altitude of only five thousand feet above sea level ; and as they were on the eastern slope, where there is no trade wind to cool the air, the temperature had become tropical.

Soon the path would mount again, and a climb of three thousand feet was in front before Huari could be reached ; but for the time being they were threading a region that was as dense with vegetation as that which borders the Amazon. Huge vines and creepers almost hid the trees from view, and green moss hung in long festoons. In places were groves of palms, in others trees of wondrous growth that were completely covered with brilliant scarlet flowers. Occasionally, between branches, they saw rare orchids.

In the jungle at the sides of the path could be heard the croaking of frogs, and on the bark of trees sounded the sharp notes of woodpeckers. At times a brilliant-colored snake crawled across the path. But they saw little else of animal life, although the occasional rustle of leaves ahead told that something savage had slunk away.

"Probably a puma," said Hope-Jones once, when they had stopped to listen, and had brought their guns into position. "But there is no cause for

alarm. A puma rarely attacks a man unless brought to bay, or unless," and he cast a side glance at Harvey, "some enterprising person endeavors to kidnap a cub."

"Will you ever forget that?" asked the boy, and they laughed.

Since the day of the lad's dual adventures little of moment had befallen the travellers. They had remained in company, and at night had selected spots in scant groves, which they had inspected thoroughly before pitching the shelter-tent. They were cautious during the day as well. As for human beings, two or three Indians had been met, but they were stupid specimens, who did not speak Spanish, and who manifested little curiosity at meeting a white man.

"They are a sneaky lot," Ferguson had said. "Notice how low their brows are and how narrow the forehead."

At times they saw a hut perched on a hill above the roadway, but they did not care to investigate, and passed them by. These places of habitation were constructed somewhat like the North American Indian's tepee, of boughs wound with animal hides.

But this all had been at a higher altitude. In the valley which they now trod, and which was a tropic jungle, there was no sign of man save the narrow path — and the path at times was almost lost to sight

in the dense growth — which told that occasionally llama trains passed that way.

Toward four o'clock in the afternoon they reached the lowest part of the valley, and at that hour the clouds cleared away and the sun came out, causing the leaves to glisten as if studded with diamonds, and the air became heavy with the perfume of flowers and the exudations from plants and vines.

Coaxed by the sun, hundreds of butterflies drifted lazily from the sides of the jungle and moved as if borne by light currents of air from flower to flower. Some were white, their large wings dotted with golden yellow; others were purple, fringed with black; others the color of the dandelion, and still others were crimson. In and out, between these slow-moving seekers of perfume, darted humming-birds like dashes of many-colored lightning, and the torn air sounded a faint note as they passed. This sunlight also brought lizards of many hues into its warmth, and chameleons which when prodded changed color, from green to red or to purple, depending upon the stage of anger. Meanwhile the atmosphere grew heavier with the tropic odors which the warm rain had coaxed from the vegetation.

“My, but I’m sleepy!” said Hope-Jones.

“So am I,” answered Harvey, who was bending over his knapsack and placing therein the rubber



"Ran . . . to the side of his friend, whom he seized by the collar."



coat, of which he stood no longer in need. "Can't we camp hereabout?"

"Miasma! chills! fever!"

"What's that, Mr. Ferguson?"

"I said miasma, chills, and fever. That's what would befall us should we remain here for a night. Beyond," and he pointed to the hill that rose on the other side of the valley, "we shall doubtless find a place for the tent. However, we may as well rest here a bit, and I spy a seat over there which I propose to occupy."

Saying this he cast aside his knapsack and rifle, then walked ahead a few yards and to one side, where he dropped upon what appeared to be a mass of twisted vine, as large as the limbs of the average tree.

The instant that Ferguson sank into the seat, Hope-Jones, who had been looking ahead curiously, let fall everything that he had in hand or on his back, and springing from Harvey's side with a bound, ran as if on a race-course to the side of his friend, whom he seized by the collar and not only lifted to an upright position, but threw with all the strength he possessed to the ground, by the path side, and ended by catching him by the legs and dragging him some distance.

Ferguson was very quick-tempered, and the moment he jumped to his feet he darted at his companion

with his fist clenched, roaring out at the top of his voice : —

“I’ll fix you ! What do you mean ? That wasn’t any joke.”

Harvey had run up, and he sprang between the young men, wondering what had caused this ; and a glance at Hope-Jones’s face surprised him the more, for it was pale as that of a corpse, whereas Ferguson’s was red, and he was blowing with indignation.

“I’ll teach you !” he repeated. “Get out of the way, Harvey.”

But Hope-Jones had found his voice by this time, and instead of resenting his friend’s language he gasped : “It’s a boa ! It’s a boa !”

“What’s a boa ?” and Ferguson glanced around.

“You sat down on a boa ! It’s coiled up over there !”

Then the young man who had been dragged along the path so ruthlessly turned as pale as had his companion, and so did the lad who had endeavored to act as peacemaker. Meanwhile the three were retreating rapidly to the point where they had dropped their knapsacks and rifles.

“A boa !” repeated Ferguson. “I can hardly believe it !”

“Yes. I once saw one coiled up like that in a managerie, and the thought that your seat was alive came to me the instant you sat down. As I drew

near I made out the scales, which resemble the bark on a tree, and I also saw the head. Its eyes are closed, and it's evidently in a torpor after gorging. You sat right down in the coils, and it's a wonder it didn't wake and squeeze the life out of you."

Ferguson shuddered, then throwing an arm around his chum's shoulder, he said : —

"Forgive me, old man."

"Why, of course. I don't blame you in the least. I wouldn't have blamed you if you had struck me. In which case we would have fought and afterward would have discussed matters. I expected as much the moment I laid a hand on you, but there wasn't time for explanations at that stage of the game."

"I should say not."

They resumed their burdens and walked forward again along the footpath, but they kept at a respectful distance from his majesty the snake, which remained as when first spied by Ferguson, motionless.

"I don't wonder that I was fooled," said he, halting for a look at the enormous reptile. "It looks exactly like branches or a huge vine coiled ; now, doesn't it ?"

"Yes, it does," assented Harvey, "but down below I can see the head. What enormous jaws !"

"Like a shark's."

"And they say that the jaws will stretch still

wider, for they are fastened together by ligaments that are as elastic as rubber."

"Yes, they will stretch so that it can swallow a young deer."

"Perhaps that's what it's gorging on now."

"Perhaps. You notice that hump below the neck? That's as far as the prey has moved down toward the creature's stomach."

"Are you going to try a shot?"

"No, Harvey. Why should I? The boa hasn't harmed us, and should I only wound it, one of us might suffer, for it's said they move with wonderful rapidity for a short distance."

"Would it not be a good plan to hasten and climb the hill yonder?" suggested Hope-Jones. "It won't be safe to sleep in this valley to-night, and goodness only knows what we'll stumble over next."

The others evidently thought so also, for they quickened their pace, and giving the boa a wide berth they pushed ahead. An hour later they were threading their way by the side of a little stream up the hillside. After walking some distance Harvey said:—

"Mr. Ferguson?"

"Yes, my lad."

"Are you going to quiz me any more about that puma cub?"

“No, Harvey. I’ll call the account square, if you will.”

Hope-Jones laughed. “It looks very much as though I should have plenty of amusement with both ——”

Ferguson and Harvey stood stock still. Hope-Jones had vanished from sight.

CHAPTER V.

HUARI, AND THE STORY OF THE BEAUTIFUL COUNTESS.

“**B**-R-R-R-R!” came a voice.
“What on earth has happened?” asked Ferguson, in amazement, bending over a large hole that had suddenly yawned at their feet.

“B-r-r-r! Help me out, fellows! I’m stifling!”

They threw themselves face down at the edge of the cavity, and reached their hands below, but could not feel anything.

“Quick, Harvey! Give me the pick! Catch that, old man!” he called, pushing the iron arms into the opening. A pressure was felt and a hoarse voice replied:—

“That’ll help. I can crawl up the side that slopes.”

The next minute Hope-Jones was with them again, blowing dirt from his mouth and saying unpleasant things about the animal that had dug the hole at the path side. His ears were filled with loam, black

earth had sifted back of his shirt collar, and such hair as projected beneath his cap was tangled with the soil. As for his clothing, it was streaked. Fortunately, his shot-gun, knapsack, and pick remained fastened to his back, and although dirty, he was none the loser because of his drop below the surface. Ferguson and Harvey brushed him off as best they could, then the three resumed their way up the hill.

"I didn't see any hole," remarked the Englishman, a few minutes later.

"It was at the side of the path ; most of it in the jungle, and leaves had fallen over the edge," Ferguson replied.

"Mr. Hope-Jones ?"

"Yes, Harvey."

"Will you cry quits on the puma cub ?"

"Certainly, my lad."

"Hope-Jones !"

"Yes, Ferguson, I know what you are about to say. Boa, puma cub, and holes are barred subjects evermore."

And they shook hands in a chain.

The path ascended rapidly and the vegetation became less tangled as the travellers proceeded ; so too the atmosphere grew somewhat more bracing, for the heavy odor of the valley did not mount to any height. With the setting of the sun the new moon

shone for several hours above the horizon, and the silvery rays from the crescent, together with the starlight, illumined their way so they were able to make rapid progress until about ten o'clock, when the ground becoming quite dry — for the rain of the valley had not extended this far — they pitched the shelter-tent and built a rousing fire, near which they placed their damp clothing. Toward midnight they turned in "tired to the bone," as Harvey expressed it, and none awakened until the sun was two hours' high. Then, looking down into the valley, they saw a billowy mist, which completely hid even the tallest trees.

"There's miasma for you!" exclaimed Ferguson, pointing to the vapor. "As we passed through it, perhaps we should take some more quinine."

They acted on the suggestion, then, after a hurried breakfast, set off on the road again, for they were anxious to reach Huari that day, and the morning start had been late. The road was up grade until the noon hour, then became level again, and the vegetation was the same as on the other side of the valley, before they had plunged into the riot of undergrowth. Toward three o'clock they saw smoke rising lazily ahead and concluded they must be nearing a town. A half hour later they came upon a number of huts on the outskirts. Fields of maize and cotton were under cultivation, and brown men, half naked,

were at work in them with primitive tools—ploughs that were but sharpened boughs of the ironwood tree, trimmed wedge-shaped, and drawn by small oxen; shovels made from the same wood; and other agricultural implements with which they were strangers, fashioned from stones that had been worn to sharp edges. All the men wore beards, some quite long.

The huts became more numerous, and naked little children, standing in the doorways or running about in the narrow streets, stared at the travellers, while the older boys and girls, who wore loin cloths or skins of animals fastened as tunics, called in the Indian tongue to persons who were within the dwellings. They met few men and fewer women; the better class of the former wore trousers and a poncho (a blanket with a hole cut in the middle, through which the head is thrust, and which falls over the shoulders); whereas the poorer class were content with the upper dress that came to the ankles: but the women wore gowns of gorgeous color, though they were ill-shapen and no attempt was made to fit the figure.

The travellers neared the centre of the town before they met a "white man," or one who did not belong to the Indian race. His features were proof that he or his ancestors had come from a foreign land, being in marked contrast with the thick, stubby nose, narrow forehead, and broad lips of the

Ayulis. Hope-Jones doffed his cap and addressed him in Spanish.

The Peruvian, who had been staring at them since they had come in sight, at once joined them, and not only shook hands, but placed his right arm around the shoulders of each in turn, patting him on the back, meanwhile speaking rapidly, with much sibilant of the s's and rolling of the r's, conveying in the most flowery language his delight at their visit.

So they had journeyed all the way from Lima! How tired they must be! But what matter? He had comfortable beds at his house and they must rest for a week, or a month if necessary, and be his guest the while. What, could only remain one night? Surely, they would be courting illness by thus hurrying along. No matter, he would speak of that later. They must accompany him now.

He placed his hand in Hope-Jones's arm, and gathering his poncho, which was quite long, much as a woman would her skirts, he turned in the direction from which he had come and led the way, explaining as they walked that there were few white men in Huari, "and," he added, "some of them you would not wish to meet."

At the word "bed" Harvey had become very much interested, so, for that matter, had Ferguson and Hope-Jones, and they were not at all loath to accept the invitation which had been so insistently given.

After travelling five minutes and entering what was evidently the better section of the Montaña town, they stopped before a one-story building, bordered by verandas, that was spread out over much ground and was surrounded by fruit trees. It was the most imposing structure they had yet seen in the village, though, like others, it was built of adobe, reënforced with bamboo.

The host and his companions were met by an Indian woman, who appeared to be of better class than those the travellers had seen on the streets, and she was presented to them as Señora Cisneros. Her greeting was spoken in excellent Spanish, and although not quite as demonstrative as her husband's, it was none the less sincere. The travellers were led to two connecting rooms, and after discarding their burdens and returning to the cool veranda, they were asked if they would not like to drink some cold coffee.

"We have learned the art of coffee-making from the Brazilians," said Señor Cisneros, "and, believe me, the beverage is better cold than hot. Would you like to observe our arrangement? But perhaps you are tired?"

Hope-Jones confessed that he was tired, but Ferguson and Harvey manifested interest in the Brazilians' teachings; so while the Englishman remained on the veranda, chatting with the señora, the two

young Americans accompanied the host to the rear of the house and into an arbor that was covered with trailing vines. It was a cool spot, far enough from buildings to be affected by all breezes, and in the centre stood an immense earthen vessel, the height of a man and at least four feet in circumference. A foot and a half from the bottom was a spigot.

"This jar is made of porous clay," said the señor, tapping the vessel, "and as a slight amount of the liquid filters through, evaporation cools its contents. Once every three months we boil coffee by the barrel. It is poured in here, permitted to settle for a week, and all sediment goes to the bottom. You will notice that I draw the liquid from some distance above," and he placed a pitcher beneath the spigot, turning which, a dark, clear liquid flowed.

"Taste it?" and he filled a small cup, then another. "Is it not cold?" he added.

Ferguson and Harvey found the beverage delicious, and expressed wonder that it could be coffee.

"Wait until some sugar is added," said the Peruvian, as pitcher in hand he led the way back to the house.

For a half hour they rested on the veranda, sipping cold coffee sweetened with brown sugar, and eating paltas, which Señora Cisneros had placed on a little table. They related their adventures to host and hostess, and, without revealing their reason for visit-

ing the interior, told that they were in search of gold.

Señor Cisneros shook his head. "Perhaps there is gold," he said, "but I have found no trace of any."

Then he told that for years he had been engaged in silver-mining, and that his llama trains passed over the road which they had travelled.

"When the railroad pierces the interior," he continued, "there will be much profit made by those who extract metals from the ground, but with the present method of transportation one does well to gain a livelihood."

The señora was very anxious to hear about Lima. She had been there once, but only for a few days, soon after her marriage.

After a time the host ordered hammocks swung on the veranda, and in these Hope-Jones, Ferguson, and Harvey rested until a few minutes before dinner. It seemed good to sit down in chairs, at a table, and to taste other food than the game and fruits of the woods, to say nothing of having crockery dishes to eat from instead of the tin plates. They were early in bed, and after a refreshing night's sleep between sheets, which, though coarse, were cool and clean, they awoke with renewed determination to continue their journey.

But while they were enjoying more of the señor's

delicious coffee — heated this time — rain commenced to fall ; huge drops came in sheets and leaden clouds hung low ; so they were nothing loath to accept an urgent invitation to remain another day and night. Señora Cisneros, learning of the scant stock of clothing they had taken with them, insisted upon overhauling their knapsacks, and she passed several hours of the morning with needle and thread, darning and mending. In the afternoon she packed them some food from her well-stocked larder, sufficient to last and add variation to their mountain bill of fare for several days.

The next morning dawned warm and bright, and the adventurers started early, after thanking host and hostess time and again ; and they promised themselves the pleasure of a longer visit on their return. They were passing from the town and were waving their caps to Señor Cisneros, who had accompanied them to the outskirts, when Ferguson said : —

“He’s a splendid fellow. I wish he were going with us.”

“So do I,” said Hope-Jones. “He would be a jolly companion.”

Harvey came suddenly to a halt.

“What’s the matter,” the young men asked.

“I happened to think of something. Cisneros is a miner.”

“Yes.”

"And he knows this country."

"Yes."

"He's honest."

"He has every appearance of being so. What are you driving at?"

"And he told us that his silver mines were not paying very well," persisted the boy.

"Yes."

"If we find gold we're going to find a great deal, are we not?"

"So old Huayno said. But why are you wasting time standing here and asking all these questions?"

"Because I move we turn back."

"Turn back! Why?"

"And ask Señor Cisneros to join us."

"Tell him the secret?"

"Yes, and take him in on shares. One quarter for each."

Ferguson slapped his hand on his thigh. "Bully for you, Harvey! That's a splendid idea. I wonder it never came to me."

"It never entered my mind until the last time he waved his hat," said the boy, looking pleased at the approval he had been given, for Hope-Jones had spoken as warmly in favor of the project as had the American; and the three at once commenced to retrace their footsteps. They found their erstwhile host on the veranda of his home, bidding adieu to

his wife, for he had planned a trip to a neighboring village.

"Take him one side and explain, Ferguson," whispered Hope-Jones.

"I am delighted that you are returning," he called out when they appeared. "Thought you would rest a little longer?"

"No, señor; thank you. We wished to consult with you regarding a certain matter. Will you go for a short walk with me?" asked the elder American.

"With pleasure," and he led the way back of the house, to the arbor, while Hope-Jones and Harvey remained on the veranda with the señora, who looked at them curiously, wondering of course what it meant, but she politely refrained from asking questions.

The two were absent about a half hour, and when they came in sight again Ferguson nodded his head, as if to say, "He will go," and the señor grasped each of them by a hand.

"Pardon me, but I must immediately tell my wife of this extraordinary news," said he. "You need have no fear. My secrets are safe with her," and the two passed into the house.

"So he'll go?"

"I should say so. You should have seen his eyes glisten. He believes that every word old Huayno uttered is true; says he's heard legends of this sort,

but no one was ever able to locate the mine. All stories agree, however, that it is beyond the cinchona trees."

"It was a capital thought, that of Harvey's! I wonder how long it will be before he can accompany us?"

The señor answered the question in person, reappearing just then and saying, "I shall be able to leave in an hour, if you wish to start that soon."

"In an hour?"

"Yes," he replied, smiling. "I am accustomed to long journeys and am always ready for departure. The señora is even now placing my things in order."

So it happened that at nine o'clock they again departed from Huari, but this time they were four in number, instead of three. When beyond the confines of the village the travellers from the coast were surprised at being addressed by their new friend in the English tongue.

"I did not know you could speak our language," exclaimed Ferguson.

"It has been long since I have used it," was the reply, "or I should have a better accent and vocabulary. For ten years, until I was seventeen, I lived in New York City; but that was thirty-five years ago, and since then I have only met Englishmen and Americans occasionally."

“Why didn’t you let us know before that you could speak English?”

“Because you are excellent Spanish scholars; and as my wife has not enjoyed the same advantages that I have, I prefer to converse in the tongue with which she is familiar. Now that we are away from Huari, however, and by ourselves, I should be very glad to use only the English and learn from you that which I have forgotten.”

They found the señor a most pleasant companion and also a valuable addition to the party. On the trip from Chicla to Huari, after the edibles which were stored in their knapsacks had been exhausted, they were compelled to live on game, and the diet became monotonous. But Señor Cisneros added to the daily bill of fare materially by his knowledge of the Peruvian vegetable world. He cut tender shoots from a certain palm tree, which, when boiled, tasted something like the northern cauliflower; from a vine that grew in and out the long grass, he made an excellent substitute for spinach: before he joined them they had feared to eat berries, not knowing which were poisonous; now they were able to enjoy a dessert of fruit after every meal. Their cooking utensils had also been added to at Huari, a pot among other articles, and in this the novel vegetables were cooked.

In lieu of a knapsack the Peruvian was provided

with two commodious bags made of llama skins, which were fastened together by a broad strip of hide by which they depended from his shoulders. He carried a rifle of the muzzle-loading description, an old-time powder horn and bullet-pouch. He proved himself as good a shot as Ferguson, and a pleasant rivalry soon sprang up between the two.

Old Huayno had told them to push ahead for three days from Huari, to the forest of cinchona trees, and find the head waters of the Marañon, one of the rivers that are tributary to the Amazon.

At its source this stream is very small, and the travellers from Callao had wondered how they might recognize it from others, and had regarded this stage of the journey with some apprehension, lest they might fail in reaching the river on which the great white rock was located. But Señor Cisneros knew exactly the course to take, and without aid of compass he directed their steps.

"We shall be longer than three days on this journey," he said. "Your Indian friend reckoned the distance as it was covered by those of his tribe who were able to move much more swiftly than we can with our numerous burdens. We shall be five days, rather than three."

"Then from the river's source to the great white rock it will perhaps be two weeks' journey?"

"Yes; I should think it probable."

He was correct concerning the distance from Huari ; it was evening of the fifth day when they pitched the shelter-tent on the edge of a dense, dark forest.

“My, but there’s sufficient quinine in there to cure a world of giants ! ” exclaimed Harvey.

“Those are not cinchona trees, my son,” said the Peruvian.

“No ? But I thought this was the forest of cinchona trees.”

“So it is ; for the reason that the valuable growth appears frequently in these woods. We will doubtless see many specimens during our journey, but none is in sight from here.”

“What does the tree look like, señor ? ”

“It resembles the beech, with the flowing branches of the lilac, and has smooth wood, susceptible of a high polish. The leaves resemble those of the coffee plant.”

“Are you versed in the method of preparing quinine from the bark, señor ? ”

“It happens that I have made the subject quite a study,” he replied. “Several years ago a representative of the British government was my guest in Huari. He had been sent to Peru for the purpose of deciding whether it would be possible to transplant young cinchona trees from these forests to India and other tropical countries. With him I made several expeditions.”

"What was the result, señor?"

"He recommended that transplanting be attempted. It was done, and I understand that cinchona groves are thriving in many places."

"Is that possible!" said Ferguson. "I was of the opinion that Peruvian bark only grew in Peru. But as I think of it, I really am very ignorant on the subject. Perhaps you will tell us more concerning the enemy of chills and fever."

"I will be glad to, but suppose we have supper first."

To this all agreed. They had made the tent ready for the night while thus conversing, and had gathered fuel for the evening fire, so that soon the pot was surrounded by a bright blaze.

"The water in which our food is cooking should have a peculiar charm for us all," said the señor.

"Why so?" asked Hope-Jones.

"Because it comes from the Marañon, which flows past the white rock and the gold mine."

"Do you mean to say that the little stream from which I fetched water is the Marañon, señor?" Harvey asked.

"Yes, or one of the small branches that form the head. A day's journey from here it broadens considerably. How it is beyond I do not know, for I have never gone further."

After supper, when they had drawn up logs for

seats near the fire, because the night was chill and a damp breeze came from out the forest, Señor Cisneros commenced his promised narrative of the white powder that occupies such a prominent place in the medical world.

“Once upon a time, in fact in the year 1638, there lived in Cuzco a most beautiful woman who was loved by all who knew her.”

“Why, you are starting out as if telling a fairy story!” said Harvey, laughing.

“The facts are something like one of those charming tales,” replied the señor, who resumed :—

“This woman, renowned for her beauty and her grace of manner, was the wife of the ruler of Peru. One day she became grievously ill, and the doctors of that time were unable to remedy her condition. Her flesh burned with great heat, her cheeks were flushed with red, her eyes were unusually bright, and the blood pulsed rapidly through her veins. She soon became delirious, failed to recognize her husband and children, and all those in the palace were in despair.

“At that time a most learned man was the corregidor, or chief magistrate, of Loxa. He was not only versed in the study of the law, but he had familiarized himself more than any other man with the vegetable life of Peru ; he was a botanist, self-taught. This man learned that the countess was at death’s

door ; and hastening to the palace he asked permission to see her. It was granted, and after looking for a few minutes upon the woman, who was tossing about on the silken couch, he abruptly left the apartment, saying that he would soon return.

“ Within the half hour he was back, carrying a shallow dish, in which were pieces of bark steeped in water. He gave the countess some of the liquid to drink and urged that the dose be repeated at intervals during two days. His instructions were followed ; she became restful, slept sweetly, and the fever left her body. In a week she was up and about, and in a fortnight was out in the palace grounds.”

“ And that story is true ? ” asked Harvey.

“ Yes, true in every detail. It is vouched for in the public records of Peru.”

“ Of course the drug he gave her was the essence of Peruvian bark.”

“ Yes, extracted in a primitive form.”

“ What was her name ? ” asked Hope-Jones.

“ The Countess of Chinchon.”

“ That is why the tree is called cinchona ? ”

“ It is, and to be more correct one should spell it ‘ chinchona ’ instead of ‘ cinchona.’ ”

“ How did the term quinine originate ? ”

“ From the Indian compound word ‘ Quina-Quina,’ meaning ‘ bark of barks.’ ”

"You say the trees are isolated, señor?"

"Yes. They seldom grow in clumps, and the task of finding them is often great; the native searchers, or cascarilleros, undergo great hardships in penetrating the jungle-like forests."

"How is the white powder prepared?"

"There are several processes, the most popular, I believe, being that of mixing pulverized bark thoroughly with milk of lime, then treating the substance to the action of certain chemicals, and ultimately the sulphate of quinine is produced. Different manufacturers have different processes; many of them are kept a secret. The object is to extract the maximum amount of quinine from the bark and leave as little of other ingredients in the powder as possible."

From the subject of Peruvian bark they changed to that of the journey on the morrow, and a half hour later, with knapsacks and bags as pillows, they went to sleep in the shelter-tent. Harvey, as he closed his eyes, thought of the beautiful Countess of Chinchon, and wondered if she could have been as pretty as Señorita Bella Caceras, a girl in Callao whom he had met under most peculiar circumstances while adrift one night in the bay of that name.

CHAPTER VI.

A DISCOVERY AND AN ALARM.

THEY entered the forest the next day, and for a week were in its confines, threading the right bank of the Marañon and following its current.

The way along the river was easy to travel, when compared with the seemingly impassable jungle to the right and the left of the stream, but it was not without its difficulties, and many times they were compelled to stop and cut the heavy growth of vines with the small axe which Señor Cisneros had added to the outfit. At night they were bothered by mosquitoes, and the insect plague became so great one evening that they kept watch and watch, the one on duty throwing on the embers of the fire a bark which emitted a light yellow smoke which drove the pests away.

Game was plentiful in this forest, and what with the flesh of four-footed animals and birds, reënforced at times by fish caught in the stream and the vegetables harvested by the Peruvian, they managed to

fare very well. But in other respects they were not treated so kindly. Thorns tore their trousers and their coats, their shoes were wearing out, and faces and hands became covered with scratches and bruises, the latter caused by many falls, which it was impossible to avoid because of the insecure footing.

In spite of this they were in the best of health; and as for their clothing, they made good use each night of the needles and thread which they had brought; and although some of the darns and patches were curiosities to look upon, they served their purpose. Hope-Jones and Ferguson had both been smooth-shaven while in the city, but by the time they were a week from Huari, mustaches covered their upper lips and light growths of beard were dependent from their chins.

"Nobody in Callao would know you," said Harvey, one morning. "I never saw such a change in persons."

"How about yourself?" retorted Ferguson. "If you could but glance at your own face in a mirror you would not say much."

Somewhat later in the day the boy made use of a deep pool of water for that purpose, and was surprised to see, peering up at him, features that were copper-colored from sunburn and exposure to the elements. The outdoor life at home had tanned him somewhat, but nothing in comparison with this.

The weather, while they were in the forest, was dry and pleasant, but the very day they emerged from its confines, a rain poured down that was even heavier than that which had detained them twenty-four hours at Huari. It commenced to fall as they were awakening, and descended in such torrents that any thought of trying to pursue their way while it lasted had to be abandoned. Their shelter-tent was fortunately pitched on a slight elevation, beneath the branches of a large iron-wood tree which broke the force of the drops, or rather of the rain-sheets.

Señor Cisneros and Hope-Jones put on rubber coats and dug a shallow trench around the canvas, making a channel toward the river, and for the remainder of the day they sat in the little enclosure, except for a few minutes when one or the other ventured forth for a "breath of fresh air." All wood in the vicinity was too wet for use as fuel; indeed, there was no spot where they could build a fire, had they had dry timber; so they were compelled to subsist upon smoked meat.

"This is Monday, is it not?" Harvey asked.

"Yes, and a decidedly blue Monday," was the reply.

Toward evening they voted it the most miserable day of the journey, and their only comfort came from the Peruvian, who assured them that the heavy

rains in that season seldom lasted for more than one day.

The rule held in this instance, and soon after dark the clouds were driven away, the moon silvered the dripping trees and bushes, and the travellers were able to emerge from under the canvas. By digging beneath some leaves, they found dried, decayed wood, that served admirably for fuel, and soon had a roaring blaze started, over which they cooked some fish that Harvey had caught during the afternoon.

After leaving the dense forest behind, they followed the Marañon through a much more open country. There were many trees, but they were not so close together, nor were they so tangled with vines, and the undergrowth also became thinner. This was due to a change in the soil, they having passed from the region of black earth to a land that contained more sand. It became quite rocky close to the river, and they were compelled to make frequent detours from the bank because of the boulders through which the stream passed.

One morning all became very much interested in witnessing a body of foraging ants, to which their attention was called by Señor Cisneros.

"These little creatures can be seen only in South and Central America," he said, "and they have the reputation of being the wisest of all antdom. Look

how they are marching in regular phalanxes, with officers in command ! ”

The diminutive black and gray army covered a space about three yards square, and was moving from the river across the path.

“ I will interrupt their progress,” said the Peruvian, “ and we shall have plenty of opportunity to observe them. Fetch me that pot full of water, Harvey.”

While the lad was hastening to the river, he dug with one of the picks until he had made a narrow channel about ten feet long, into which he poured the water as soon as it was brought him, and just as the vanguard of the ant army approached. The little soldiers halted on the edge of this ditch, and from the sides and rear hurried ants that evidently were officers.

“ Now I shall give them a small bridge,” the señor said, “ and if they have the intelligence of a body that I observed about a month ago, they will quickly make the footway broader and in a novel manner.”

Saying which, he cut a rather long twig, one that was narrow, but would reach across the little trench, and this he placed in position.

Two of the ants hurried on the little span, then returned to the army. They evidently gave some instructions, for two or three score of the main body left the ranks, and hurrying on to the twig, swung

themselves from the sides in perfect line, until the passageway had been made three times as broad as before. Then, at an order, the army commenced moving over.

“Isn’t that wonderful !” exclaimed Hope-Jones.

“Indeed, yes. Many students of the ant rank him in intelligence next to man. You will observe that the little fellows who are offering their bodies as planks for the bridge are of a different color, and evidently different species from the marchers, and that others of both kinds constitute the main body.”

“Yes, that is so.”

“The little fellows are slaves.”

“Slaves?” echoed all three.

“Yes, slaves captured in battle, and made to do the masters’ bidding.”

“Do they always obey?”

“I have watched them many times and have never seen any sign of rebellion. Frequently the superior ant, or the one who owns the slaves, will remain perfectly still and direct the little servants. In that way I saw a score of the slaves tug away at a dead bee, one day, and it was perfectly plain that a larger ant that stood near by was giving orders.”

“You say they are called foraging ants?”

“Yes. They roam about in bands like this in search of food. They are carnivorous and eat such

insects as are unfortunate enough to be in their path."

The army was fully fifteen minutes crossing the living bridge, and when the last company had passed, the slave ants detached themselves and followed. But two or three, evidently exhausted by the strain, fell from the twig into the river. No attention was given them ; they were left to drown.

"Did you notice that?" said the señor. "Now watch how differently members of the superior class of ants are treated when in distress."

He stepped ahead a few feet and drawing some of the larger species from the main body with a stick, he covered them partly with gravel, until only a leg or two were visible. At once several ants of the same species stopped their march, and summoning a small body of slave ants, went to the rescue. By butting with their heads and tugging away at the small stones the slaves soon rescued the imprisoned masters, and all rejoined the army, bringing up the rear.

"Bravo !" shouted Harvey, as if the little fellows could understand.

That afternoon the travellers fell to conversing of the old mine which they expected to find. Not that it was an unusual subject for conversation, for it was the topic most frequently broached ; but the talk this day was of special interest, because Señor

Cisneros told them minutely of the mining laws of Peru. Hope-Jones had expressed worry lest foreigners would not be permitted to enjoy the results of discovery, but his fears were set at rest by the Peruvian, who said :—

“Our mining laws have been greatly misunderstood in other countries, and exaggerated reports concerning them have been sent broadcast. The foreigner’s right to own what he finds, providing no one else has a prior claim, has never been disputed. Recently it was made the subject of special legislation. During the last session Congress passed a law which, among other provisions, states that ‘Strangers can acquire and work mines in all the territory of the Republic, enjoying all the rights and remaining subject to all the obligations of the natives respecting the property and the workings of the mines ; but they cannot exercise judicial functions in the government of the mines.’ ”

“What does that last clause mean, señor ? ” asked Hope-Jones.

“It has been interpreted to mean that the foreigner cannot hold the position of mine superintendent, the object plainly being to prevent his having active control of the natives who, of course, would be called in to do the manual labor.”

“It is fortunate then that we have taken you with us,” said Ferguson. “You will be able to act as

superintendent, and we shall not have to employ an outsider."

"I should like nothing better ; that is, providing we find the mine. But are we not, as you say in the States, counting our chickens before they are born ?"

"Before they are hatched," corrected Harvey, but not in a manner which the señor could possibly take exception to—for that matter, he had asked them many times to speak of his mistakes during the trip. "Oh, it's fun to do that," continued the lad. "So I move that we have an election of officers, and I place Mr. Hope-Jones in nomination for president."

"I vote ay," said Ferguson.

"And I also," said the Peruvian.

"Of course *I* do," Harvey said. "And I nominate Mr. Ferguson for treasurer."

The others agreed as before.

"Let me propose Harvey Dartmoor for secretary," said the señor, entering into the spirit of the moment.

The choice was unanimous.

"And now," Hope-Jones said, "we will name Señor Anton Cisneros vice-president and general superintendent of all our properties."

"Thank you, gentlemen," said the Peruvian, doffing his hat. "I only hope the stockholders of the corporation will be of your mind."

"The stockholders! How can they change our election?"

"You will have to sell stock in order to work the property, and those who buy shares will have a right to vote."

"Certainly. But cannot we hold the majority of shares?"

"I am glad to hear you say that. If we find anything nearly as valuable as the old Indian claimed, it would be a pity to let the property pass out of our control."

"Tell us something more of the mining laws, won't you?" asked Ferguson. "In speaking of the recent enactment, you stated that 'strangers should be subject to all the obligations of natives.' What does that mean? Is the taxation heavy?"

"On the contrary, it is very light, just sufficient to meet the expenses of the government mining bureau. The tax is fifteen dollars a year for every mine, — gold, silver, nitrate of soda, salt, petroleum, — no matter what it may be."

"And how would we 'prove a claim,' as they say in the States?"

"Did you inquire in Lima whether any mines had been reserved in the locality where we intend prospecting?"

"No, señor, for we did not wish to attract attention to that section of the state."

"You were doubtless right. It was perhaps unnecessary. In all probability no one has sought treasure in that region. Still, that point must first be definitely settled. The government issues a quarterly statement, called the 'padron,' in which are given the boundaries of all new claims. These padrons are indexed, and it is possible to learn the location of all mines in a given region. If we discover valuable properties where old Huayno said they were located, or anywhere else, we will at once stake off the land, just as is done in the United States, then return to Lima, examine the padron index, and if no one else has a claim we will notify the Deputy Commissioner of Mining that we desire title.

"He will issue us a document, upon our payment of the first year's tax, which will be similar to the 'patent applied for' paper given in the United States. Within ninety days after receiving this, it will be necessary to return to the mine with one of the officials of the mining department and an official surveyor, whose expenses for the trip we shall be compelled to meet. These will fix the actual boundaries, and upon their return to Lima a document will be issued giving us the right to mine the property, and guaranteeing our sole possession so long as we pay the annual tax."

"That all seems very simple," said Harvey.

They had few adventures during this stage of the journey. Several times wild animals crossed their paths, but the young men had learned wisdom on the trip from Chicla to Huari, and Señor Cisneros was an old woodsman, so they were always on the lookout. Game continued plentiful, although the country grew more open each day.

The Marañon changed from a slow-running stream to a broad, rapid-coursing river; in places were cataracts, and the shore line became uneven, boulders being piled so high that the way between them was difficult to find. In this rough country they were once all day going three miles and were exhausted when night came. Harvey and Ferguson had large blisters on their feet, and the other two proposed that they rest for the twenty-four hours following; but the Americans were too anxious to proceed, being so near the journey's end, and the next morning, binding pieces of a handkerchief around the bruised places, they announced themselves able to push ahead.

This was the twelfth day from Huari, and all agreed that at any time they might come upon the great rock that marked the way to the mine. They were certain they had not passed it unobserved, for since the fifth day from the village they had not moved a step forward after dusk or until morning was well advanced. When compelled to make de-

tours, one or more of them had ascended every half hour to some eminence, like a tree or a high mound, and had carefully surveyed the right bank to the water's edge.

Toward four o'clock on this day Hope-Jones and Harvey were walking somewhat in advance of the others. The boy was limping slightly and was in more pain than he would admit to his companion, who had urged him not to go any further, to which Harvey had replied, "One more mile and then I'll give in."

The lad was singing, to keep up his courage, and the words were those of the familiar Sunday-school hymn : —

"Onward, Christian soldiers,
Marching as to war."

Suddenly he stopped, gave a yell, and his face turned pale.

"What is it?" exclaimed Hope-Jones. "Are you hurt?"

"Look! Look! Look!" and the boy pointed straight ahead, between two trees. There, bathed in sunlight, the Englishman saw that which made his heart beat like a trip-hammer — a high boulder that shone as purest marble.

"Hurrah!" he shouted, throwing his cap in the air. "Come on, everybody! There's the rock! There's the great white rock!"

Ferguson and Señor Cisneros came up at a run.

"What? The rock?" they called.

"Yes. Look!" and the man pointed in the direction they had gazed.

That instant the Peruvian exclaimed excitedly :
"Down with you! Drop down, everybody! Down, flat on your stomachs!"

Startled by his commanding tones they obeyed.

"What is it?" asked Hope-Jones.

"Sh! In a whisper! Indians! A score of them!
And they look like the Majeronas!"

CHAPTER VII.

THE CANNIBALS OF PERU.

“THE Majeronas !” echoed Ferguson, but in the whisper which he had been cautioned to use. “Are they not a savage tribe ?”

“They are.”

“I didn’t know they came this far, not within three or four hundred miles of here. So I was told in Lima.”

“It is only recently that they have visited this region. Within the last year several reports have come to Huari of their depredations.”

“They are said to be cannibals, are they not ?”

“Yes.”

Harvey shivered and drew his gun closer.

“What are we going to do ?” Hope-Jones asked. He was thinking, and so were the others, how lucky it was that they had induced the experienced miner and woodsman to accompany them.

“For a time we will wait here,” was the reply. “They may go away. Again, I am not certain they

are the Majeronas. I didn't spend any great amount of time examining them, I can assure you. They may be friendly Ayulis, but just at present we do not care to meet even friendly Ayulis."

"What is the difference between the tribes, señor?" Harvey asked, gaining control of himself and preventing his teeth chattering.

"The Majeronas are much lighter and their beards are thinner. The Indians yonder certainly answer the description, but the light may have deceived me."

"I think the light of a setting sun would darken a face, don't you?" suggested Ferguson. "It certainly gave a red tinge to that white rock."

"Perhaps you are right."

They were lying very close together, and words spoken in a whisper were heard by all. Each had drawn his weapon to his side, and those with modern guns threw open the breech-locks and made certain that loaded shells were in the chambers, while the Peruvian examined the cap on his rifle and swung loose his powder-horn and shot pouch. They remained in this position for nearly an hour, and not hearing a sound from the direction where the Indians had been seen, hope came that the redmen had gone.

But this was dispelled toward five o'clock by Señor Cisneros, who pointed to above the rock be-

hind which they were hiding, and called attention to a thin line of blue smoke in the distance.

"They are making a fire," he said, "and have undoubtedly chosen that place for a camp."

Neither Hope-Jones, Ferguson, nor Harvey said a word. The Peruvian waited a minute, then whispered : —

"Do you want to retreat? We can crawl for a short distance and then take to our feet."

"And the white rock in view! No, I don't want to retreat," said the Englishman.

"Nor I," said Ferguson.

"What do you say, Harvey?"

"I'd rather die first," and he clenched his fists in a manner that showed he meant all that he said.

"That's right," whispered the señor. "You have courage; that's the main thing. It would indeed be a pity to leave the spot now, for I am convinced that old Huayno told the truth in everything. If they are Majeronas, it is only a wandering band. The main tribe is far away, and we shall have only these to settle with, should the worst come to pass. But the probabilities are that they will go away in the morning. Should they stay in this neighborhood for a time, we might be able to remain in hiding. I think we have three or four days' supply of dried meat, and it will be easy to crawl down to the river

for water. If it comes to a fight, we have these," and he tapped his rifle.

"What are they armed with?" asked Ferguson.

"Arrows and bludgeons, I have been told."

They remained in the prostrate position for some time, in fact until night fell, then following the direction of Señor Cisneros they moved nearer the river, arriving at last at a shallow basin, surrounded on three sides by boulders, between each of which was a space of about a half foot, giving a view of the surrounding country, and which would make excellent openings for their guns, should it prove necessary to use them.

"How's this for a natural fort?" said the Peruvian. "We're near the water supply, and I think we can hold the position for a time."

"What about supper?" asked Harvey, who, after the first minute's fright, had shown as much unconcern as any of them and was now feeling quite hungry.

"Dried meat and water," promptly said the señor. "No fire must be lighted to-night. I will get the water."

He took a skin bag, which he had brought from Huari, and slowly crawled in the direction of the river. He moved so cautiously that they did not hear a sound, and when he returned to the camp, in a quarter of an hour, his appearance was so sud-

den and without warning that all three were startled.

They ate sparingly of the dried meat, for Señor Cisneros, who had taken command at the urgent solicitation of the others, had divided the food supply into rations sufficient to last three days.

"We must call you captain now," said Harvey, as he munched his share, "for these are war times."

After supper they made preparation for the night, moving cautiously, so that metal might not ring out, nor anything fall. They had no poles for the shelter-tent; it was deemed unwise to try to secure any, so they disposed the canvas as a bed and spread a blanket. This done, the señor said he would go out and reconnoitre.

"I must ascertain whether they are Majeronas or Ayulis," he explained, "and I must also learn their number."

He took everything out of his pockets and divested himself of such clothing as would impede his progress—removed his poncho, his shoes and stockings, and soon was ready, barefooted and clad only in a woollen shirt and trousers. Sounds now came distinctly from down the river. These noises, first heard faintly while they were eating their frugal supper, grew in volume and became long wails, rising and falling.

"They are singing," whispered the señor. "That is a chant."

He placed a hunting-knife in his belt, laying aside his rifle, and announced himself ready to leave.

"What if they should see you and should attack? How are we to know it?" asked Ferguson.

The captain shrugged his shoulders. "I think you would not know until I failed to return."

"That will never do, sir," protested the American. "Take your revolver," and he picked up the small weapon, which had been discarded with the rifle. "If you are attacked, fire a shot, and we will hurry to the rescue. We all stand together in this. Don't we, fellows?"

"Of course we do," said Hope-Jones and Harvey.

He looked at them gratefully and started to leave, but stopped a minute to say: "While I am gone keep a close watch. Don't worry, even should I be absent two hours, for it will be slow work. I will fire the pistol should anything happen. Good-by."

"Good-by," they said, and each grasped him by the hand.

It was quite lonely when he had gone, and they then appreciated how much they depended upon him. From down the river the sound of the chant came louder, evidence that more voices were joining in the evening song. It was a night with no clouds in the

sky, and the full moon shone direct upon their camp and the surrounding country, silvering the broad leaves of trees, throwing the trunks into blackness more deep by the contrast, and causing strange shadows to appear on all sides. As a gentle wind stirred the branches, the shadows moved from side to side. Once or twice Harvey, who was stationed at the opening near the wooded country, was certain that he saw the figure of an Indian, and whispered a warning, but each time it proved to be only the obscuration of the moonlight by a branch or a rock.

From the river bank came the croaking of frogs, tree-toads sounded among the growth of vegetation; in the blackness where stood the trees, flitted fireflies, and occasionally a glow-worm crawled along the ground. They were startled now and then by a faint splash in the river and made ready for an attack, but as nothing followed, they concluded that a fish had risen and in diving again had flipped the water with its tail — a sound they would not have ordinarily noticed, but which seemed loud to their sense of hearing, more acute than usual because of the nerve strain under which they rested.

After a time that seemed to him interminable Harvey whispered to Hope-Jones, "I wonder if anything has happened to the captain. Has he not been gone longer than he expected?"

The Englishman looked at his watch. The moon-

light was so bright that he could distinctly see the dial and the hands.

"No, he has been absent only an hour," was the reply.

From the woods came the hoot of an owl. A few minutes later a low growl was heard in the distance.

"That's a puma," said Ferguson. "If it should come this way we would have to fire, and then those redskins would be attracted."

But it did not come near them, nor did the growl sound again. The owl continued to hoot dismally, and the call of a night bird was also heard. Of a sudden Hope-Jones exclaimed "Sh!" and pushed his rifle through the opening at the side of the river.

A dry branch had crackled. His warning was followed by a voice outside the camp, saying in low tones, "It's I, boys," and the next second the captain had rejoined them. He was considerably out of breath, and they noticed that his clothing was more torn than when he had left the camp.

"It's pretty tough work crawling nearly a mile on the hands and knees," he finally found voice to say. "But I saw them and had a good view, lying on a rock that overlooked their camp. I was so close that I could have picked off a half dozen with my revolver."

"Are they Ayulis?" asked Ferguson.

"No, Majeronas."

“The savages?”

He nodded his head.

None of them asked any more questions for a full minute, then Harvey said rather hoarsely, “How many of them are there?”

“It’s a large band, my boy. More by far than I would wish for. I counted forty.”

Forty—and they were four! No wonder their cheeks blanched.

“They have eaten a deer and other animals that I could make out,” the captain continued, “and are lying around on the ground, resting after their feast. It would be an easy matter for us to creep up to them and pick off a score and probably put to flight the remainder, but I don’t like to have the blood of even a Majerona on my hands, unless to save our lives. What do you say?”

They agreed with him, then inquired what would be best to do.

“There’s nothing to do, but to wait developments. We are in no danger to-night, so long as we keep still. The probabilities are that they will move in the morning, and I think they are going down stream. However, should they come this way, we shall have to face the music.”

“Could we not confer with the chief and promise him presents if they will let us alone?”

“Confer with a Majerona! Never, my boy.

They are the Philistines of Peru and are cannibals. Why, that fire over there was not to cook their food. They pulled the deer apart and ate strips of meat raw. I don't wish to frighten you, only to make it plain that we are near an enemy that doesn't even know what it is to spare a man of a different tribe or race. To change the subject, I will suggest that as we have to prepare for a siege, our best plan is to get some sleep. It will be necessary to keep a close watch all night. I am very tired and I will ask Mr. Hope-Jones to stand the first, Mr. Ferguson the second, and I will take the third."

"What about me?" asked Harvey. "I should do my share."

"Very well. I thought you might be lonely on guard. You may take that last watch, the one near daybreak. That will make four watches of two hours each. Come, those who can get rest had better improve the opportunity."

Saying which the Peruvian rolled himself under a blanket and lay down in the shadow of one of the boulders. Ferguson followed his example, and Harvey, drawing his cover close, took a position in the centre of the camp.

"Tell the lad to come out of the moonlight," said the captain to Ferguson, who was between them. The American did so, and Harvey crept

closer to Señor Cisneros. "Why was that?" he asked.

"Because moonlight falling on one's face in this latitude sometimes causes insanity."

"I have heard that," the boy said, "but I thought science had exploded the theory."

"Science or no science, no Indian will ever lie down in the open without covering his head. And now good night. Try to sleep."

But as for sleep, nothing was farther from Harvey's mind. He lay quite still, however, so as not to disturb the others, and watched Hope-Jones, who stood at the opening near the river, his rifle resting on the little ledge of rock, gazing steadily in the direction of the Indian camp. The owl continued to hoot, the night bird to call, the tree-toads chirped merrily, and the frogs kept up their doleful croaking. But the mournful chant had ceased, and it was evident that slumber had stolen over the camp of the Indians. The boy, in earnest endeavor to sleep, resorted to all those expedients which are recommended, and finally counted up to one thousand. After that he yawned and wondered if it was possible, if he was really losing consciousness under such circumstances; if—— Some one tapped him on the shoulder, and he sprang to an upright position.

"It's your watch, Harvey," the captain said. "But never mind, I will stand it for you."

"No, sir," said the boy, stoutly, as he rubbed his eyes and picked up Ferguson's rifle. The captain rolled himself in his blanket without further words and was soon breathing heavily.

Could it be possible, thought the lad, that it was really his turn? Why, it seemed that only the minute before he had watched Hope-Jones standing at the opening, and now the Englishman was lying down. Why, not only the captain but Ferguson had stood watch in the meanwhile! And there was no moonlight! Of course not; it was four o'clock in the morning. He yawned; then shook himself and muttered, "This will never do!" and, all at once, he was wide awake and fit for his duty as sentry.

It was chill and damp. From the river a light mist was creeping. He could not see it, but he felt the wet on his cheeks. The bird had ceased crying, and so had the tree-toads and the frogs. It was indescribably lonely; but his great comfort came from the fact that three trusted companions were so near that he could almost touch them with his foot, and he knew they would awaken at his slightest call.

While standing there, his rifle resting on the ledge, he thought of the dear ones at home and wondered what they would say, could they know the plight he was in. "My, but Louis and Carl would give their boots to be here, I know!" was a sentence that passed through his mind. And the other members

of the Callao Rowing Club—what adventures he could relate to them upon his return ! He thought of the regattas, when as coxswain he had steered to victory the eight-oared shells in which Hope-Jones had pulled stroke and Ferguson bow ; and now here they were, far in the interior of Peru, near a camp of cannibals.

At the thought of cannibals, Harvey's heart gave a quick jump. But it was soon steady again, and he commenced thinking of the dreary night he had passed in Callao Bay, while afloat on a torpedo, which strange adventure of the younger Dartmoor brother is related in detail in "Fighting Under the Southern Cross." He had come out of that safely, and why not out of this ? Then the lad remembered that for several nights he had neglected to say those words which he had learned when a little child at his mother's knee, so he fervently repeated the prayers she had taught him. After this he felt more courage than ever, and when a fish rose in the river, it did not cause him to start as had the sounds earlier in the night. Thus communing with himself and with his God, time passed quickly for the boy, and soon he began to make out the shadowy forms of the mist that rose from the water.

In this latitude, near the equator, there are only a few minutes of twilight, so it was soon bright enough for him to look at the watch that had been left on

the stone ledge. Ten minutes to six! He could soon call the others. The generous impulse came to let them sleep for another hour, but it was followed by the thought that the Indians were undoubtedly awakening, and as they might at once march up the river, it would be well for all to be on the alert. So when the long hand pointed at twelve and the short hand at the dot which on clocks and watches is the sign for six, he touched the captain lightly on the arm. Señor Cisneros sprang up. It was broad day. He awakened Hope-Jones and Ferguson.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FORT ON THE MARAÑON.

FOR several minutes after the camp was astir the Peruvian stood near one of the openings, and placing a hand partly back of an ear, so that more sound waves might reach that organ, he listened intently, in hopes that he might determine whether the Majeronas were on the move or still in camp. But in early day they are not given to making as much noise as at night, when that wild chant, considered part of a religious ceremony, rolls out, and the captain turned to his companions, disappointed.

Then, as all were hungry, another ration was consumed by each, and as there was plenty of cool water in the skin no one was called upon to risk a trip to the river. They continued conversing in whispers and observed the same caution as on the evening before. Unless they gave thought to the cause, their low tones seemed very strange and unnecessary, for nothing was in evidence to remind them of the presence in the vicinity of savages; not even did smoke

rise from the place where they were encamped. Soon after breakfast Harvey said to Señor Cisneros : —

“If you will permit me, captain, I will crawl over to that tree,” and he pointed to one whose lower branches were near the ground, yet whose trunk rose to quite a height, “and by climbing I can see what the Indians are doing. The leaves are thick so that I shall be well hidden, and my suit is about the color of the bark.”

The plan was approved and the boy left the camp, imitating the manner in which Señor Cisneros had made his journeys of the evening before. The three within the enclosure looked at him approvingly, and the Peruvian said: “He worms his way along as well as an experienced woodsman. That’s a very clever lad.”

“Indeed, he is,” said Hope-Jones, “and a more truthful, honest youngster I never met.”

They watched the tree which Harvey had spoken of as his goal, and before long they saw something moving in the branches, but very slowly, for the boy was observing even more caution than when on the ground. After ten minutes’ careful climbing he reached a spot halfway to the top, where the branches were fewer, and there he stopped, evidently at a sufficient altitude to look over the intervening boulders and see the camp of the Majeronas. He was stationary for a few seconds, then they saw him com-

mence to descend, but no longer slowly and with caution; he came down hand below hand, and when he reached the ground he ran to the camp, not attempting to observe the quiet which had marked his departure.

Knowing that he must have good cause for alarm and feeling that an attack was possibly imminent, the three men stood at a "ready" in the openings, their weapons poised. When Harvey joined them he said quickly, but in low tones: —

"A half dozen of the savages are coming this way. They were not far off when I left the tree and were moving slowly, looking closely at the ground, as if in search of something. The others are still in camp."

Saying this, Harvey picked up his shot-gun.

"You say they are walking slowly and looking down, as if in search of something?"

"Yes, captain. They were bent low, and at first I thought they were crawling; then I saw that they appeared to be examining the ground as they passed."

"Hum! I suppose they found my trail. The copper-colored rascals have a scent as keen as a dog. But I think that I fooled them."

"How so?" asked Ferguson.

"I took to the water when halfway between the camps and waded for a couple of hundred yards."

"Then you don't think that they will be able to track you?"

"No. But they may search the neighborhood before they leave."

"Harvey reports the main body still at the white rock. How do you account for that?"

"The band is undoubtedly resting for the day. It is probable that the savages have travelled some distance and have called a forty-eight hours' halt. I can think of no other reason, for surely there could be no game to attract them in this vicinity; and there is no hostile tribe near for them to attack."

"You don't suppose they are in search of the gold, do you?" asked Harvey.

"Gold! They don't know what gold is. They are the most ignorant Indians in all Peru."

This whispered conversation was suddenly brought to an end by Ferguson, who placed his fingers on his lips, to enjoin silence, and pointed through the opening nearest the river. They looked in the direction, and saw a head projecting beyond a rock. It was the head of a Majerona, long black hair, and skin a light copper color. The savage looked up and down stream, then was lost to sight for a moment, and soon stood out in the open, where he was joined by several others.

They were naked, save for strips of hide that served as loin cloths. They were tall, well-formed

men, straight and muscular : each held a long bow, and dependent from the belt of hide, instead of swung over the shoulder, was a quiver filled with arrows. The cannibal who had first thrust out his head had done so cautiously, as if to survey the country, but they soon became bold, evidently convinced that they were alone. First, they took a few steps up stream, at which the white men tightened their grips on the weapons, and then, for some reason, they turned about and hurried away.

“Whew ! that was a narrow escape !” muttered Ferguson.

“Yes ; and I fear it will prove no escape after all. They were sent out to scout, and another band undoubtedly will be despatched in a little while. The chances are against our not being seen, and as the probability is that we will have to fight, I propose that we make our fort better suited for defence. Harvey, fill every pot, pan, and cup we have with water. Don’t try to crawl ; only step as softly as possible so as not to cause stones to roll and dry branches to break. Hope-Jones and Ferguson, I wish you would go to that drift pile over there, and bring me all the branches and wood possible. You cannot bring too much.”

They at once commenced their allotted tasks, and the señor remained behind the boulders, keeping an eye down stream, and at the same time directing

where the wood should be placed as it was brought in. First, he had the openings between the rocks carefully filled, to the height of his shoulders, the pieces of wood interlaced in the same manner that log fences are built in the American farming country. This done, he gave orders for wood to be piled at the rear of their position. It will be remembered that the boulders formed a shelter on three sides, and Ferguson and Hope-Jones, seeing at once that the Peruvian's idea was to close the fourth, redoubled their efforts, and within a half hour they had brought in what they deemed sufficient material to erect the barricade.

"More!" the captain said, when they asked him if that would do. "Bring all of that pile if you can."

Harvey had finished his task by this time, and placing him on guard, Señor Cisneros turned his attention to shaping the rear defence. He constructed the wall V-shaped, the angle outward, explaining to the boy that in this form it could better withstand the force of an attack, should the Indians try to rush the position. But the longest boughs he placed slanting against the high boulders, so that they formed a roof over half the space. These he wove in and out with a tough young vine that he had directed Ferguson to bring from a tree near by, and which had fallen in a mass when a slight pull had been given.

An hour after they had commenced their task, the captain said there was sufficient wood on hand, and Hope-Jones and Ferguson, tired, red of face, and perspiring profusely, pushed in through the narrow opening that had been left for their entrance, which the Peruvian at once closed with some branches that he had placed to one side for that purpose.

Ferguson had cut his left hand, and the handkerchief which he had wound around the injured member was blood stained. When he was asked if the cut was a deep one, he replied by saying that it was lucky it had not happened to the other, or he would have trouble holding his rifle. Then he questioned Señor Cisneros why he had formed a roof over part of the enclosure.

"To be sure it's nice to have shade," he said, "but I should have thought you too tired to attend to that."

"And might have had mercy on you two and not have asked you to carry in more boughs than absolutely necessary, eh?" responded the captain, smiling.

"I didn't say that."

"No; but I wouldn't blame you for thinking it. However, this little roof will probably prove more valuable than any defence we have constructed."

"How so?"

"Did you ever see a Peruvian Indian shoot an arrow? an Ayuli, or a man of any other tribe?"

No. They had not.

"I have watched them many times; and I have seen them kill a deer and not aim at it at all; only shoot up in the air."

"And the arrow would describe a parabola and fall on the animal?"

"Its flight would rather be the sides of a triangle, and it would turn in mid air at the apex, then falling at the same angle on the other side, would strike the deer in the back."

"Have you seen this done?"

"Yes; and not once, but several times."

"Then I can understand why you built the covering!" exclaimed Hope-Jones; and so did the others.

As the three men were quite tired, the captain let Harvey stand guard, and they lay down in the shade. Thus another hour passed, and not a sight of an Indian was had, nor did a sound come from down the river.

Toward noon the rations of dried meat were passed around, and so was water, sparingly. After that they talked and waited, relieving each other at the opening near the river every half hour, in order that all might be in good condition should an attack occur.

One o'clock came, two, then three, and the little garrison commenced to speculate on the probability of danger having passed. Perhaps the band had gone away; it might be that the savages they had

seen in the morning had been recalled to camp in order to resume the march; or, perhaps all were resting, and no further attempt was being made to reconnoitre the surrounding country. In that event they would undoubtedly leave early the next morning. But even after the Majeronas had departed, how long would they have to remain quiet and on the defensive before they dared approach the location of the mine?

"I would almost rather have a fight with them; that is, if we could give them such a taste of modern firearms that they would leave the country," said Señor Cisneros, rising from the place where he had been resting in the shade.

He approached the opening that faced the thinly grown forest, and gazed over the brushwood that was piled as a protection, in the direction of the trees. They saw him bend forward, as one is apt to do when looking intently at something, and then, turning, he beckoned Ferguson to his side.

"Look," he whispered. "Do you see that long grass waving over there, under that ironwood tree?"

"Yes. I guess it is wind blown."

"But there isn't a particle of wind. Wet your finger and hold your hand up high."

The American did so. "No," he said. "There's no breeze. What makes the grass wave, then?"

"One of those copper-skinned rascals is crawling through it," said the captain.

"Shall I pick him off?" and Ferguson reached for his rifle.

"By no means." The señor reached out his hand and caught the barrel. "We are not sure that they have seen us, although such is probably the case. Aside from that, I would rather not be the first to engage. But a better reason than all is that we should reserve our fire, if firing be necessary, until we can let go a volley into their midst. It might stampede them.

"Ah! see!" he exclaimed a moment later. "My first surmise was correct."

The Indian had risen suddenly from the grass and had bent his bow. But the arrow was not aimed in their direction; it was pointed toward the woods, away from the river bank, and that moment Ferguson saw a young deer near a dwarf palm. Sharp and clear they heard the twang of the hide-string and the whistle of the dart, so near was the savage to them; and the animal fell dead in its tracks. The Majerona walked leisurely over to where his prey had dropped, and lifting it on his broad shoulders, he started back to camp.

"He is a hunter for the band," said the captain. "There are probably others out. His actions are proof that they do not even suspect we are in the

vicinity. I suppose they think that my trail, which they followed for a short distance this morning, was that of a wild animal. Now I believe that we are going to get out of this without even a brush with them."

All breathed easier at these reassuring words ; all except Harvey, who said, "But there is a chance they may come, is there not?"

"Why, from your tone, I really believe you wish they would," said the señor. "But," he added, "that chance and a remark which I made to Mr. Ferguson have reminded me of something. I believe I said that a volley might have a demoralizing effect, did I not?"

"Yes ; I think you did."

"Then I shall endeavor to increase the effect. Didn't I see a gourd in camp?"

"Harvey has one which Señora Cisneros gave him."

"Let me have it, Harvey. I can't promise to return it, but I may make it of use."

He emptied some powder into the receptacle, then asked for a contribution of loaded shells, which he put with the black grains. With some shreds of cotton, which he twisted into shape, and some dampened powder he made a fuse and placed it in the opening of the gourd, then sealed it with moist clay made from the soil underfoot, dampened with water.

“There !” he exclaimed, “there’s a bomb ! It may fail to ignite, and it will have to be handled quickly, but if it ever does go off in the midst of the copper-skins there will be a foot-race down the river that will prove interesting.”

He had been an hour making this weapon of defence. The hands of their watches pointed to four o’clock, and the shadows to the east of them commenced to grow long. Ferguson was on watch. The others were lolling about on the ground, thinking more of other matters than they had at any time since the evening before, when they were suddenly startled by a rifle shot.

An answering scream came from above their heads, and a wounded Majerona, who had crawled to the top of the lowest boulder and was peering into the camp, came rolling down upon them.

CHAPTER IX.

ATTACKED BY CANNIBALS.

IN his descent the savage struck Harvey, who was crawling from under the shelter, and the lad was sent sprawling to the other side of the little enclosure.

“Hold him ! Keep him down !” called the señor to Hope-Jones, who with great presence of mind had fallen upon the struggling Majerona. But there was little use for the Peruvian to urge, or the Englishman to use his strength, for the Indian was mortally wounded ; his struggles were death throes, not efforts to give combat, and in a few seconds he rolled over, dead. The rifle ball had pierced his brain. Two shots had rung out from the opening while this was going on, and howls and cries answered them. Ferguson was busily pumping lead into others of the cannibals, and when his companions hurried to his side, they saw one man stretched out not fifty feet from the enclosure, and another, evidently wounded, was being assisted away in the direction of the encampment by a half dozen fellow-tribesmen.

“Now we are in for it!” said Señor Cisneros. “But first, my friend,” he said warmly, offering his hand to Ferguson, “I want to tell you that you have saved our lives. Another minute and all those reptiles would have been in here, and we should have been massacred. How did you happen to see him?” pointing to the dead savage, lying against the brush heap—“and how did you happen to act so promptly?”

Ferguson’s cheeks were red and his eyes were snapping in a manner they had, when he was excited. He was also breathing quickly.

“It was only good fortune; that’s all,” he replied. “I grew tired standing stock still while you were loafing in the shade, and to amuse myself I had lifted my rifle to my shoulder and was taking aim around at different objects. I suppose that while doing this I neglected to watch the opening as closely as I should, and one of the Indians sneaked up in the grass, like that fellow did this morning. But it happened that when he put his head over the rock, I was aiming at a spot near where his black hair appeared; so all I had to do was to pull the trigger.”

They all congratulated him—all, including Harvey, who had picked himself up and was rubbing his head where a lump the size of a hickory nut testified to his having struck against a stone after being

given momentum by the wounded savage; then they hastened to make such preparations as were necessary before the attack which they now knew must come.

"First, let's get rid of this body," said the captain, and taking down some of the brush at the rear, they dragged the corpse out and toward the river. Returning, they made everything snug again, and the captain disposed of the forces for the fray.

"My plan of reserving the fire for a volley has been spoiled," he said, "so the next best thing will have to be done. Ferguson, you're a splendid shot. Do you think that with a boost you can get up on the rock, in about the place where your friend, the Majerona, was lying?"

"Yes, I guess so," replied the American, surveying the steep boulder.

"Then it would be well for you to do so and commence picking them off with your rifle as soon as they come in sight. We have only two openings down here that command their approach, and there won't be an opportunity for us all. We must kill and wound as many as possible before they get near. That's our only hope."

"What am I going to do?" asked Harvey. "There are only two openings, and I suppose you and Mr. Hope-Jones will want to cover those."

"You can alternate with me, my boy. My rifle,

unfortunately, is a muzzle-loader, and while I am ramming in a charge you can step to the peep-hole and use your shot-gun. Of course," he continued, "the shot-guns will not carry as far as the rifles and will not be serviceable as soon, but we have plenty of ammunition, and I think it would be wise to blaze away with all pieces as often as possible during the first five minutes and make plenty of noise." Then turning to Ferguson again he said : —

"Don't stay up there a second after it seems dangerous. You can slide down, can you not, without assistance?"

"Of course."

"How many cartridges does your rifle carry in the chamber?"

"Eight."

"Then don't take any more with you. They will be sufficient until the arrows commence to fly, and then I want you with us here. That reminds me, I told Hope-Jones and Harvey to blaze away, regardless of aim, with their shot-guns for a time, but I suppose you understand the same does not apply to the rifles. We must make every shot count."

"Never fear for that. Will you give me a boost now, sir? They will be coming any minute."

"Yes. Help me, Hope-Jones. Steady me a bit,"

and the Peruvian stood upright against the rock and told the Englishman to press against his back. "Leave your rifle, Ferguson, and we will pass it up to you."

By stepping on a stone the American obtained a foothold on the señor's shoulders, then reaching up, he caught a ledge of rock and bringing into practice an exercise he had learned on the horizontal bars, he drew himself with ease to the ledge, from which he scrambled to the surface.

"Quick!" he exclaimed, the moment he looked around. "Pass me my rifle. They are coming! I can see them down the river! Gracious, what a band of them!"

At the captain's direction, Harvey jumped on his shoulders as Ferguson had done and passed the repeating rifle to his companion, then the Peruvian and the Englishman took positions at the peep-holes, while the lad stood back, waiting.

If the truth be told his heart was beating like it had on days after a boat race, and he felt the blood surging to his temples. There was an instant after Ferguson said that the Indians were coming that he felt dizzy. But it passed almost as soon as it had come, and he bit his lip until it bled, for he was angry that any alarm should have seized him. The moment this feeling of anger came, he was surprised to note that his heart commenced to beat normally,

that the fever left his cheeks, and that he became self-possessed. And from that moment he became as cool and collected as any one in the little fort.

"How far are they off?" called out Señor Cisneros.

"A half mile, sir," answered the voice from above.

"Do you think there are more than forty?"

"I dare say not; but they seemed to number two or three hundred when they first came in sight."

"I counted forty when I reconnoitred their camp last night, and they must have all been within the vicinity of the fire, for there would have been no object in their scattering at that hour. Therefore, with two dead and one wounded we have thirty-seven to fight. How are they coming? In a body?"

"Yes; close together; all in a bunch."

"So much the better."

This conversation had been carried on in loud tones, that Ferguson might hear and be heard, for he was lying on the far side of the boulder. It seemed strange to speak in this manner after the enforced whispers that had been the rule for twenty-four hours.

"Now I can see them," said the captain, and he rested his rifle on the ledge. A sharp report sounded above.

"Did you bring another down?"

"No," called back Ferguson. "I missed."

"You're honest, that's sure. Most persons would have said they didn't know, but thought so. Better reserve your fire a few minutes."

The American did as he was advised, but before any of them below had an opportunity to take effective aim, his rifle spoke again and the captain called : "How now ?"

"I saw a copper-colored rascal whirl 'round and 'round and then drop."

"Bravo ! That makes thirty-six !"

A minute later the Peruvian's weapon sounded, and without waiting to notice the result, he darted back and commenced to reload, saying : —

"Now blaze away, my lad !" and Harvey rushed to the opening. Hope-Jones in the meantime had discharged one barrel, then another, of his shot-gun and had thrown back the breech to press in fresh shells, while the sharp report of Ferguson's rifle came from above, once, twice, thrice, and the American was heard to call above the din : —

"They're getting it ! You struck one, Cisneros, and I have fetched two more."

"Thirty-three," said the Peruvian, and he crowded Harvey one side as the boy was loading his double-barrelled gun, and taking aim once more, he sent another bullet into the dark throng that was rapidly approaching, for the Indians were running.

After that there was no opportunity to keep count. Ferguson came sliding down from his altitudinous perch, having exhausted all the cartridges in his rifle; and ejecting the worthless shells, he loaded again, then stood behind Hope-Jones, to alternate with him at the peep-hole, and after the Englishman had fired both barrels point-blank, the American jumped to the opening and pumped eight shots in the direction of the enemy, as fast as the mechanism of the modern arm would work.

Harvey, the while, had been loading with feverish haste, running toward his peep-hole the moment it was left by the Peruvian and discharging his weapon. He took aim, and after the third discharge, he saw an Indian fall, evidently from shot he had sent speeding, for the man was somewhat detached from the others and the boy had tried to bring him down. The little enclosure became filled with smoke, and their faces and arms were streaked with dirt. All were more or less powder-burned, but of this they did not know till afterwards.

“What now?” suddenly said the captain, for the Majeronas had halted. “They are bending their bows! Watch out, all! Down on your faces!”

The warning was not a second too soon. Whistling like a wind that scurries around the gable of a house in winter, a flight of arrows poured into and over the little fort, and others could be heard strik-

ing against the front boulder. Several of the darts came through the openings and rattled against the stones, and one transfixed Ferguson's knapsack, which was in a corner.

"Now, at them once more !"

And the men and boy jumped to their places as before.

The target was not nearly so good. The Indians had separated and were spreading out. They could be seen running in different directions, evidently carrying out some command of their chief, and a few minutes later a dozen commenced climbing trees, keeping their bodies on the side opposite the fort.

"This is different," exclaimed the señor. "Pick off all you can while you have the opportunity, for we shall soon be compelled to seek shelter."

The guns were kept busy until the barrels were so hot that they burned the hands, but only one Majerona fell—a bold fellow who had run forward of the others, and whom it was Harvey's lot to make bite the dust, at which the captain patted the boy on the shoulder and said : —

"I wish I had a lad like you. If God spares me, I am going to make it my business to tell Señor Dartmoor what a son he has."

A little later he called, "Under cover, all of you !" and they darted beneath the thick mass of boughs that he had placed against the side of the boulder.

Then they knew with what wisdom he had constructed this protection, for arrows commenced to rain into the enclosure from all sides; some whistling low over the boulders, others dropping as if from the skies. They came with such force that those which fell without stood upright in the ground, and although others penetrated the protecting branches, they lost their force and none of the defenders of the fort was harmed. However, as a further protection, they lay flat on their faces. This lasted for full five minutes; then there was a lull, and Señor Cisneros, creeping to an opening, said : —

“They are forming again. No, don’t fire,” and he restrained Hope-Jones. “I have an idea.”

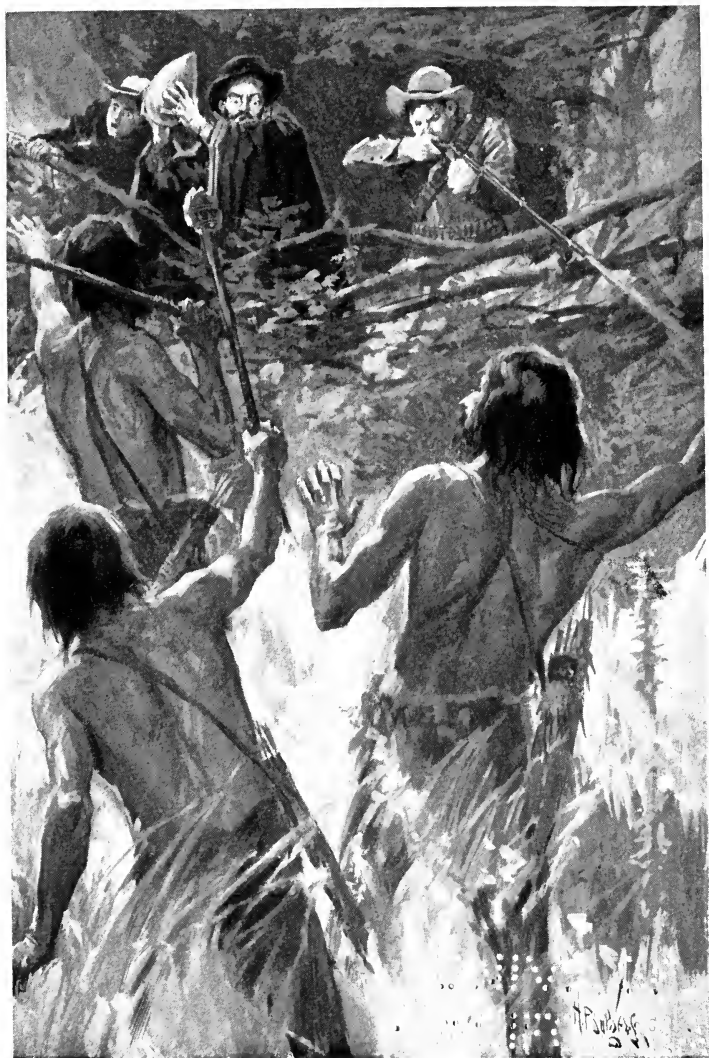
“What is it?”

“If we withhold our fire, they will think we are all dead or so grievously wounded as not to be able to resist. You see, they don’t know anything about our roof. The fellow who got a view inside was placed in a position where he could not relate the result of his observations. Yes, they are forming in a body for a rush. Now wait, everybody, until I give the word!”

He darted under the boughs to the furthestmost corner and at once reappeared with the gourd which, earlier in the afternoon, he had fashioned into a bomb.

“Who has a match?”

Harvey gave him some.



"Angry copper-colored faces showed at the opening."



“Here, Hope-Jones, take my rifle! You can use it and your shot-gun as well, for I shall be busy with this thing. Harvey, don’t try to fire, but have your gun handy. When I give the word, pull away as fast as you can at the brush in the opening nearest the Indians, so that I may have room in which to throw.”

These directions were no sooner given than the band of Majeronas, yelling, sprang toward the stone fort. The four defenders bent down low, that they might not be seen. The Indians ran with great speed, brandishing bludgeons; they had cast their bows one side, evidently believing the victory won. Señor Cisneros let them come to within a stone’s throw, then he called:—

“Now let drive!” and Ferguson and Hope-Jones, jumping to the opening, discharged three shots simultaneously, and the repeating-rifle of the former was worked as it never had been worked before.

“Pull down the brush! Use both hands! Quick now!”

Harvey sprang to his task and tore away the small branches. The crackle of a match was heard, and, just as angry, copper-colored faces showed at the opening, the captain called out:—

“Duck down, everybody!”

The next instant a report as of a cannon was heard, followed by screeches and howls; and a cloud of white smoke drifted away before a light

breeze that had sprung up, while a crackle as of giant fire-crackers told of the exploding cartridges with which the gourd had been loaded.

“Out and after them !” screamed the señor, seizing his rifle and pushing his way through the opening, in which act he was followed by the three companions.

But they met none in combat. The Indians were fleeing, running in a confused mass along the river bank, shrieking in their fear. Two or three picked up their bows as they sped, and turning, let fly each an arrow, then joined the others ; but the majority never turned. The defenders of the little fort followed for several hundred yards, firing as they went, not in endeavor to kill more, for they did not stop to take aim, but to spread the alarm ; until at last loss of breath caused a halt. But the Majeronas, greatly reduced in numbers, kept on, their howls growing fainter and fainter, until they were heard no more, and the last of the savages disappeared down the river.

“Do you think they will come back?” panted Hope-Jones.

“No. They believe they attacked a band of devils. There is no longer danger.”

“Where’s Harvey?” It was Ferguson who asked.

They looked around, and their cheeks blanched. The boy was not with them.

CHAPTER X.

NEAR TO DEATH'S DOOR.

FOR a minute none of the three said a word, then Señor Cisneros suggested that perhaps the lad had remained behind.

“No. That’s not his way. He would be with us unless hurt, or ——”

Hope-Jones could not find the word for the alternative; his voice choked. “Let’s hurry back,” he added.

They did so, going as fast as when in pursuit of the enemy, and not stopping until they had reached the fort. Outside they saw their boy companion lying beside a large stone not a hundred yards from the opening. An arrow was fastened in his breast.

Hope-Jones dropped on his knees. Ferguson reached over to pull out the arrow, but was restrained by the captain.

“Don’t,” he said. “It might cause a fatal hemorrhage if there is not one already. Wait until we see how far it has entered;” and he commenced

unfastening Harvey's coat, which had been buttoned close, that it might not impede his action.

"I fear it has reached his heart," said the Englishman, in a whisper. "See, it penetrated the left side."

"His hands are cold," Ferguson added. "I cannot feel the pulse."

All three were quite pale and were trembling. It seemed probable that life had left the boy's body.

"Bring some water, quickly," said the captain. "I will do the best I can."

Ferguson darted off to the fort and returned at once with the skin bag filled.

"Help me turn him over. There, that's right; not too much," and the captain loosened another button, then carefully inserted his hand beneath the coat. He felt in the region where the arrow had penetrated, and touching the shaft moved his fingers cautiously downward. Then a puzzled expression came over his face, and he muttered: "Something hard. I don't quite understand. There isn't any blood."

He withdrew his hand, looked at it, then inserted it again and caught the shaft firmly. The dart turned to one side, but did not come out. The captain jumped to his feet.

"That arrow isn't in Harvey's body!" he exclaimed. "It's fast in something that he has in the

pocket of his flannel shirt. He's fainted; got a knock on his head or something. Throw some water on his face!"

Ferguson did as directed, and Harvey immediately sat upright, then began pawing the air, as if warding off a blow, and tried to rise to his feet. Desisting suddenly from this effort he exclaimed: "What's all the rumpus about? And — and — where are the Majeronas?"

Ferguson and Hope-Jones were too overjoyed to speak. They clapped the boy on the back, rubbed his arms, and asked him where he was hurt. For reply he put his hand to his head, and they found there another lump.

"I stumbled, I guess, and struck my head," he said. "I can remember falling, and I saw a lot of stars and — but say, where are the savages?"

"Yes; and when you were falling, this was shot into you." The captain pointed to the arrow, which was drooping, but still was held firmly.

Harvey looked at it in surprise, then reached under his coat. As he touched the shaft his cheeks turned a fiery red. He endeavored to withdraw the dart by pulling at it from the outside, but it would not come, so Ferguson bent down and helped him unfasten the remaining buttons of his coat and remove the garment. But even with the weight of that on the shaft, the arrow held firmly to the some-

thing that was in Harvey's pocket, and he was at last compelled to cut the flannel. Then all saw that the point was embedded firmly in a pincushion, no larger than a plum, a pincushion well stuffed with cotton and which had barred the way to the boy's heart.

"How on earth did you happen to be carrying such a thing in your pocket?" asked Hope-Jones.

He did not answer. He was looking at the little article, and his face turned pale as he thought of his narrow escape from death; and at the same time he thought of those he had left behind and of the giver of that which had so strangely saved his life, Señorita Bella Caceras, niece of the famous Captain Grau, who, the evening before the departure of the three from Callao, had made this little present to the lad, that he might have some token to carry with him into the wilds of Peru. Thus a girl's thoughtful gift and a boy's romantic manner of carrying the keepsake had resulted in the arrest of a Majerona arrow, aimed at the heart.

He did not explain all this to his companions, who pressed closer, congratulating him and patting him on the back, for every moment they realized more and more what a narrow escape he had had; no, he kept his secret and later he sewed up the pocket, replaced the little pincushion, and vowed that he would carry it with him so long as he lived. He

also saved the arrow, so that when he returned to Callao he could present it to the señorita.

The men attempted to assist him into the fort, but Harvey protested that he was as well and as able to be about as ever in his life.

"Then let's start for the white rock," said Ferguson.

"No, indeed," was Señor Cisneros's rejoinder. "I for one favor a good rest."

"Perhaps that would be a better plan."

"Indeed it would," assented Hope-Jones. "I confess that I am played out."

"First, let's give these bodies some sort of burial," said the Peruvian, and he pointed to the corpses that were strewn over the ground.

They dug a trench with their picks, and gathering the dead Majeronas from near the fort and from several hundred yards away, they placed them in the shallow opening and covered them with earth. Fourteen were thus interred. How many savages had been wounded they never knew. A few of those who had been struck by bullets and not killed during the battle, had been helped away by their comrades ; others, who were mortally wounded, had been killed, as was the custom of the tribe.

CHAPTER XI.

BEYOND THE WHITE ROCK.

THE grewsome work of burial completed, they reëntered the little fort and made preparations for the night. First, they went to the river bank and enjoyed a bath in the cool, crystal waters ; and there for the first time they discovered many bruises on their bodies, caused by bumps and knocks received during the quick action of the afternoon.

Ferguson had scraped one of his shins while sliding down the rock after emptying his rifle at the approaching Majeronas, and the cut on his left hand pained him greatly. Hope-Jones found a black and blue spot on his right shoulder, which he could not account for until he remembered that in his excitement he had several times neglected to press his shotgun close when firing ; and a little later he discovered that the lobe of his right ear was torn.

“An arrow struck there,” said the captain, after examining the wound. “You had as narrow an escape as had Harvey.”

Then the captain looked at his own physical condi-

tion and reported that the tendons of his left ankle had been strained, and that a long powder burn on his right cheek marked where a flash had sprung upward from an imperfect cap on his old-fashioned rifle.

But of them all Harvey showed more marks of battle. A very painful black and blue spot on his side told where the foot of the Majerona had struck him after the drop from the rock, and two bruises on the back of the head marked his contact with stones on the occasions of his falling. His hands were scratched and torn in several places, but he could not tell how these minor wounds had been received until the captain remarked that he had never seen a brush-heap disappear so rapidly as when the boy pulled away branches from the opening, to make room for the bomb ; and then the lad recalled that at the time he had felt the sharp prick of thorns.

Although they were refreshed after the bath, they limped more or less on their return to camp.

"Is that due to the fact that we have just seen where we have been hurt?"

"Partly that and partly because the excitement is over," said the captain.

"It will be good to have a hot supper," the elder American remarked, changing the subject ; "but I'll be switched if I feel much like making a fire and cooking."

"What have we to cook, anyway? There's not a bit of fresh meat in the camp, and I'd rather go to bed hungry than hunt for anything," interposed Harvey.

"Go to bed?" queried Hope-Jones.

"Well, turn in, lie down, go to sleep, or whatever you call it; but it's going to be 'go to bed' for me, because I shall pile up some of that dried moss over there and make a couch."

"A good idea," said the señor. "We will all do it. As for supper, I for one propose to eat my last ration of dried meat and not try for any game to-night."

The others did not demur, and although the sun was not yet set, they proceeded to bring in the moss and distribute it under the boughs that had sheltered them from dropping arrows. But as the three adventurers from Callao were spreading their blankets and kicking off their shoes, Señor Cisneros interrupted them with, "Not so fast there! What about a watch?"

"A watch to-night? Is one necessary?"

"Certainly, and every night, so long as we are in this region. The Majeronas are probably gone for good, but some of them might return. Yes, sirs, we will take our turns, above and below, as they say on shipboard."

"Who first?" asked Hope-Jones.

"Suppose we draw lots. Better still, let Harvey

choose which watch he will stand, as he is the one most used up, and we men will draw straws !”

Harvey decided that he would prefer to be sentinel from six till eight o'clock, then have a night's rest through, so the others lay down under the shelter, and he stationed himself in the opening, near the river, with Ferguson's rifle in hand.

A heavy rain fell on the following day, and they were only too glad to remain under the shelter of the boughs which, reënforced with the canvas of the shelter-tent, made an almost perfect watershed. Harvey was somewhat feverish in the morning, and the others felt even more wearied than on the night before, so all were rather pleased than vexed that the elements had conspired to delay their journey.

Lest the younger member of the party should fall ill, Señor Cisneros early set about administering the remedies which were at hand, the first of which was quinine, and he gave Harvey ten grains. Then, believing that a hot foot-bath would prove beneficial, he cast about for a utensil that could be improvised as a tub, and finding none, he dug a hole, two feet deep and about two feet square, into which he poured water heated by Hope-Jones over a brisk fire built in a corner of the fort, where a ledge of rock sheltered the crackling wood from the rain. This novel bath was at the edge of the lean-to of boughs, and when Harvey, following the captain's directions,

plunged his lower limbs into it, raindrops fell on his knees, but these and his body to the waist were covered with moss, and the lad was compelled to stay in that posture for ten minutes and "steam," while the captain added hot water until the patient yelled out that he was being scalded.

"I dare say you think you are," said the Peruvian, as he desisted, "but I can bear my hand in here."

Notwithstanding a demonstration to this effect, Harvey protested against the temperature being increased, and at last was permitted again to roll over on his moss couch, where, covered with blankets, he soon fell asleep.

It was three o'clock in the afternoon when he awakened. The fever had passed, the aches had disappeared from the muscles, and he said that he felt somewhat better, though a trifle weak. To prove there was at hand a remedy for this condition, Señor Cisneros pointed to Ferguson, who was busy in the far corner, turning 'round and 'round, over the glowing heat of embers, the ramrod of the captain's rifle, on which were spitted a dozen little birds; and from the broilers came a savory odor that caused Harvey to smack his lips in expectation.

"They are plovers," said the señor. "Hope-Jones went out about ten o'clock to find you a delicacy, and he succeeded in bagging enough for us all."

The wild birds, reënforced by one of the captain's

palm-shoot vegetables, furnished a most edible repast, and it was not long thereafter before Hope-Jones, Ferguson, and the youngest member of the party turned in, the captain taking the first watch.

When Harvey awoke in the morning, he reported himself fit for any task, and the others, having recovered from strains and bruises, agreed to start as soon after breakfast as the packing of the camp equipment would permit. Before the departure, Señor Cisneros fastened a pole firmly between two of the rocks and attached thereto a handkerchief.

"It's possible, though not probable, that hostile Indians may appear again," he said. "In that event it would be well for us to retreat to this position, which is naturally fitted for defence, and which we have rendered even more impregnable. As the boulders do not show their peculiar form from down stream, we might pass the place by in our haste to seek shelter, but with that flagstaff set I don't believe we could miss it."

"Hadn't we better give our little fort a name?" asked Harvey.

"To be sure we had," said Ferguson. "Victory do?"

"I would suggest Majerona Hill," said Hope-Jones.

"Would not Fort Pincushion be more appropriate?" asked the captain.

“Capital ! Capital !” exclaimed the two men, and the boy blushed as he had done on the occasion when he felt the object in his pocket which had been pierced by the arrow.

Although the white rock, which had been their goal since leaving Callao, had seemed only a short distance from the fort, yet they were nearly half an hour reaching a point beneath its strange formation, and all four expressed astonishment at the brilliant, pearly white lustre. Ferguson was the first to touch the stone, and in passing his hand over the surface, he noticed that his finger nail left a mark.

“My, how soft it is ! Almost as soft as soap-stone ! Can you tell us, Mr. Geologist, what manner of outcropping the Earth has given us here ?”

Harvey, thus appealed to, took from his knapsack the little hammer which he had brought for such purpose, and knocking off a fragment, he examined it critically, then said : —

“It looks very much like alabaster.”

“Alabaster in these regions ?”

“Yes, and it is not unusual. The stone is found near Cuzco, and it abounds in the Cordilleras of Chile. To be sure, the best quality comes from Tuscany, but excellent specimens abound in this interior region, and we have found an unusually large deposit.”

"It seems to me that I perceive a faint odor of lime," said Hope-Jones.

"Then I am correct in saying that this is alabaster," the boy answered ; "for alabaster is a compact variety of sulphate of lime."

"Now for the mine !" exclaimed Ferguson, and they at once turned from the shaft and made ready to continue the journey.

"Old Huayno directed you to proceed farther north for a half mile, until you should see another white rock, did he not ?" asked the captain.

"Yes."

"Then put your compass on something level, Hope-Jones, and give us the bearings."

The Englishman did so, and the needle pointed in a direction that took them away from the stream, into the light growth of woods. They tightened their belts and started, pushing forward rapidly and eagerly. Months afterward Harvey said that no stage or event of the journey, not even the encounter with the savages, was so firmly impressed on his mind as was this period after they swung to the left from the bank of the river Marañon.

"I had a stuffy feeling," he explained ; "all choked up, and didn't know whether I should cry like a baby when I reached the mine, or shout like a man. I thought all the time of mother, father, Rosita, and Louis, of what riches would do for them.

Yes, to be sure, I thought of myself as well, but to tell the honest truth, it was not so much with the idea of having great riches at hand, as it was to be able to purchase some books that I wanted, and a sail-boat."

These thoughts of the boy were shared in their intensity by the other members of the party. Hope-Jones had left an aged mother in England, who, though not in want, would be none the less a sharer in any good fortune that might come to her son; Ferguson built air-castles for his sister, who was studying music in Boston, and who had written him only by the last mail that she would be perfectly happy, could she but go abroad. As for the captain, he had long wished that six months might be passed in Lima and the remaining period of the year in their home in Huari. Thus busied they said little or nothing during the first ten minutes after leaving the Marañon, but kept on diligently, making as much speed as was possible over the rough country.

Their speculating reveries were interrupted by the captain, who called a halt for a conference.

"Your old Indian friend said something about trees having been felled across the path from the river to the mine, did he not?"

"Yes."

"Then it is about time for us to meet with them

in quantity. There are a few here and there, but not enough as yet to indicate that we have reached the region where the Ayulis placed obstructions. Another matter to consider is that a white rock hereabouts, although the timber is sparse, would not be so readily seen as the pile of alabaster on the river bank. And again, it must be remembered that the Ayulis did not use a compass in determining the course of their journeys ; they judged such a direction to be north, and another south, by the relative bearing of the sun. Therefore, although Huayno said to go north from the river, yet his 'north' might have been northeast or northwest."

"What then do you propose to do, sir?"

"I believe it would be wise to spread out. You, Hope-Jones and Harvey, walk over to the right until you are within easy calling distance of one another, and Ferguson and I will do the same on the left. We will then move forward in a fan-shape and cover the country closely, watching out for a white rock and for fallen trees that seem to have been felled systematically. Everybody move slowly," he added. "About like this," and he took several paces, to give them an example.

Fifteen minutes later not one was in sight of the other, and then they commenced the slow forward journey, "beating the country," one might say, not for animals or birds, but for signs that a century

before had marked for the aborigines of Peru the place where great treasure lay buried.

Harvey, between the captain and Hope-Jones, could hear the swish of the latter's walking-stick as he cut the plants through which he moved, but not a sound came from his left. Occasionally a little animal darted from a decayed log ; or, with a whir, a bird, startled from the undergrowth, would fly ahead, slanting upwards. But he saw nothing else. The trees were not much nearer together than in an orchard. Of course they were large of trunk and branch, and the shade was almost continual. Here and there one had fallen, but the boy saw no signs of a number having been felled by man. After fifteen minutes had passed he heard Hope-Jones call : " Anything in sight, Harvey ? "

" Nothing." Then he repeated the question, turning to the left.

" Not a sight that is cheering, my boy," was the captain's answer.

The Peruvian's voice was quite indistinct, and Harvey, believing he had borne too far to the right, altered his direction somewhat. Then time commenced to hang heavy, and the minutes dragged like hours as he moved on, but ahead he saw an interminable succession of giant trees, interspersed here and there with immense heliotrope bushes, but never a rock of prominence or a number of trees

felled as if to offer a bar to progress. Finally there came a call that set his blood tingling.

"Come on, Harvey, and bring Hope-Jones with you!" shouted the captain.

The lad repeated the cheerful words, and soon the crackling of underbrush announced the approach of the Englishman, who, panting from his exertions, joined the boy, and then the two made equal haste to the side of the Peruvian, who guided them by frequent shouts.

"What is it?" both asked.

"Ferguson has seen something and is waiting," he answered, then called out: "Give us a word, over there!"

A shout came in reply, and going in the direction of the sound, the three made the most haste possible.

They found the elder American standing near a mass that resembled a mound, and in every direction ahead of him were similar curious shapes.

"Don't you think these have been formed by heaps of fallen trees, covered in time with vegetation?" he inquired.

"You may be right. Here, lend me your pick-axe, Hope-Jones;" and taking the tool the captain commenced vigorously to make an opening. The mound yielded beneath the blows and proved to be little more than a mass of foliage supported by soil that had been formed of dead timber. Within were

gray, shrivelled pieces of wood, some of which Harvey drew forth and eagerly examined.

"Yes," he exclaimed, "these are pieces of trees, almost fossilized."

"Then we are in the right path," said Hope-Jones. "But where is the white rock?"

"That remains to be found. Let's push onward," said the captain.

As all the mounds seemed to be within reach of the eye on both sides, and to extend in a line straight ahead, they continued their way together and travelled through the strange land that spoke of the Ayulis' anger and the efforts of the aborigines to prevent their treasure falling into the intruders' hands.

Captain Cisneros remarked that the trees were not so tall as those they had left behind, which, he said, was conclusive evidence that the primeval growth had been cut down, and that this thin forest had sprung into being since that day. It was noticed that the ground sloped somewhat from both right and left; they were, in fact, in a little valley, through which, as Ferguson remarked, a stream once flowed and probably still flowed during the rainy season.

For nearly fifteen minutes they kept on, and then as suddenly as the mounds had commenced, they came to an end, and beyond them the trees were of

ancient growth once more. They looked at one another quizzically, as if to say : " We have passed the obstructions. Where is the white rock that marks the mine ? "

" We've missed it somehow," said the captain. " Perhaps it's to the right, or the left. Hope-Jones, you and Harvey go around the mounds on one side, and Ferguson and I will go on the other."

They separated, as proposed, and carefully surveyed the country for the landmark which meant fortunes to them. The two parties were an hour making the detour, and when they met again at the point where Ferguson had first called their attention to the curious earth formations, neither had any encouraging report to make. All were puzzled. What could it mean? Had old Huayno hoaxed them, and thus vented his wrath against white men? The captain asked this question and was assured by both Hope-Jones and Ferguson that they, who had known the old Indian, could not entertain the thought for a minute. Could he have been mistaken concerning the location of the second white rock? That was possible, but where could they search for it, if not among these mounds? Huayno's estimate of distances had proved different from theirs; still the general direction had been correct, and they had found all the landmarks that he had named — all save the last and the most important.

While discussing what had better be done, they unstrapped their knapsacks and ate the noonday meal, for the morning had passed. This done, the captain said that he would keep on some distance in the general direction they had followed since leaving the river, and while he was gone the others could explore the mound region more thoroughly.

It was four o'clock when they met again, weary and discouraged, for not one had seen aught that led him to believe they had located the mine.

"I thought I had the rock in sight once, boys, but it turned out to be a tree with white blossoms," said the captain.

As the shades were lengthening in the woods, the explorers turned back to the river, and once arrived at the white rock on the bank, they decided to camp there for the night and not walk to Fort Pincushion. So they pitched the shelter-tent, built a fire and cooked some game which they had killed on the return trip. Then, after arranging for the watch, those who could "turn in" went to sleep immediately, for their brains were fatigued by the disappointment, even as their bodies were by the physical exertion.

CHAPTER XII.

HARVEY AS A SENTRY.

HARVEY was called at two o'clock in the morning, and he posted himself as sentinel under a small tree that grew near the shelter-tent. He had become somewhat accustomed to being rudely awakened and to being alone while the others slept, and now that an attack by Indians was improbable, and it was no longer necessary to strain his sense of hearing that he might note the slightest sound, the novelty of the situation appealed to him.

This night the moon in its third quarter shone from out a cloudless sky, and at the altitude of the great intermontane valley in which they rested, the rays were brighter than at points nearer the sea level, so the river bank and the open country were visible with nearly the distinctness of day.

As the boy walked a few times back and forth, a rifle on his shoulder, then paused for a short rest under the tree, he puzzled his brain to account for their not having found the second white rock. He

believed implicitly in the truth of all that Huayno had said, and was confident that not far from where he stood great riches were stored in the ground.

But could they ever locate the mine? It would be a task of years to demolish all those mounds and ascertain which hid the entrance to the old workings; and should it be attempted, others must learn what they were doing on the banks of the Marañon, others would flock to the place with picks and shovels, and among these others some one or two might first find the store of yellow metal.

Thus cogitating he walked closer to the river and stood beneath the great white rock, which shone resplendent in the moonlight, glistening and seeming to be translucent. Studying the strange geological formation attentively, he noticed for the first time that only the side facing up stream and the side facing the woods were white; those facing down stream and the opposite shore were much darker, almost a slate color. This peculiarity had not been remarked, because no member of the party had gone farther down stream. The boy also saw that the rock was several feet from the river and that its lower portion, where the water washed, had turned this same slate color.

He paced slowly back to the tree, meditating on these observations, and endeavoring to solve the reason for the varying of the physical features of

the unique landmark. In the midst of this his mind strangely reverted to the time of a dinner party that had been given at his father's home in Chucuito about six months before, and try as he might he could think of nothing else than this entertainment and the people who were present; then of the conversation that had occurred — and the moment the mind cell that contained the impression left by that conversation opened, he had the solution of the problem which confronted them.

At this dinner Don Isaac Lawton, editor of the *South Pacific Times*, had been asked to explain the absence of rain on the Peruvian coast-line. He had done so in these words: —

“The absence of rain on the coast is caused by the action of the lofty uplands of the Andes on the trade-wind. The southeast trade-wind blows obliquely across the Atlantic Ocean until it reaches Brazil. By this time it is heavily laden with vapor, which it continues to bear along across the continent, depositing it and supplying the sources of the Amazon and the La Plata. Finally, the trade-wind arrives at the snow-capped Andes, and here the last particle of moisture is wrung from it that the very low temperature can extract. Coming to the summit of that range, it rushes down as a cool and dry wind on the Pacific slopes below. Meeting with no evaporating surface, and with no temperature colder than

that to which it is subjected on the mountain tops, this wind joins the south trades and reaches the ocean before it becomes charged with fresh moisture."

Harvey, recalling this conversation, for it had been imprinted upon his mind, because it was the first explanation he had heard of this Pacific coast phenomenon, began to reason that if the trade-winds blew in a certain direction over Brazil and in a certain direction on the coast, there was undoubtedly a regularity of the wind currents in this intermontane valley. He had noticed since leaving Huari that what breeze stirred, blew in their faces ; therefore the general direction of the wind was up stream, or toward the southwest.

That being true, the reason why a portion of the great white rock had turned a slate color was evident—it was weather-stained, and the remaining portion, sheltered from the winds, retained its lustre. At this stage in his reflections he recalled a sentence from his geology : "Alabaster is soluble to a certain extent in water."

This white rock was high above the river and had not been dissolved by the stream. Its northern portion had undoubtedly been worn by rains, and it was probably not so high as when old Huayno was a young man ; still it had been better preserved than if the full force of the stream had been brought to bear upon it.

“What if conditions had been different and the rock had been wave-washed all these years?” Harvey asked, and then answered himself: “It would have been worn down and all sides would have been weather-stained, even as the more exposed portions are.”

In the region of the peculiar mounds they had noticed a depression, and all had agreed that it probably formed the course of a stream during the rainy season. Perhaps the second white rock had stood in this depression; it was undoubtedly not so high as that which was nearer the river, even in old Huayno's day. What then would have been the natural result of a low rock of alabaster, washed five and six months in the year by swiftly running waters?

Again he answered himself, to the effect that under such circumstances a rock of this description would have been worn down in the eighty years, perhaps almost to a level with the country, and its entire surface would be slate-colored, like the weather-beaten sides of the landmark on the Marañon.

Five minutes later Harvey entered the shelter-tent and awakened Ferguson.

“My turn to stand guard, eh?” said the elder American, as he threw off the blankets and commenced putting on his clothing.

The boy made no answer until he was joined on the outside by the young man ; then he said : —

“No, it isn’t your turn, and it won’t be for an hour, but I would like to go into the woods for a little while and don’t wish to leave the camp unguarded.”

“Go into the woods ! Are you crazy, lad ? Has the moon affected you ? ”

“I have an idea that I can find the second rock.”

“You have, have you ? ”

“Yes.” And then he explained his chain of reasoning.

“Now I call that clever,” said Ferguson, “and I believe you have hit the nail on the head. Don’t you want somebody to go with you ? ”

“No. There’s no danger. I shall carry my shotgun. Besides, the camp must be guarded, and I don’t want to awaken the other two.”

“Why not ? ”

“They’ve had their watch ; and besides, if I fail, there won’t be so many persons disappointed.”

“Sensible precaution, that.”

“I wish I had Mr. Hope-Jones’s compass.”

“Here it is. He gave it to me in the woods because his pocket is torn.”

“Let me have it, please. Mr. Ferguson, 5280 feet make a mile, do they not ? ”

“Yes.”

"And one-half of 5280 is 2640?"

"Certainly."

"I cover about two feet at every step through this broken country, do I not?"

"About that. But what are you driving at? You are the greatest boy to fire questions at one that I ever met."

"Why, I want to go in the direction old Huayno gave for exactly a half mile, or as near that as possible, and then investigate."

"Well, take care of yourself, and if anything happens fire a shot and I will hurry to your aid."

"Good-by."

"Good luck."

And the boy disappeared in the timber. "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten," Harvey counted, and then into the twenties and into the hundreds, thus numbering the steps as he took them in a north direction, guided by the compass needle. He soon lost sight of the camp and of the white rock and was well in the region of the tall trees. He had carried only his shot-gun, the little iron hammer, and the compass. The early morning was cool, the air bracing, and as the moon's rays gave plenty of light, he made quick progress; but from the start he so regulated his steps that they would not be much over two feet each in length. Whatever addition there might be to that measure

he thought would in the total correspond with old Huayno's idea of a half mile, for the Indian's estimate had invariably been less than the actual distance.

He had counted one thousand before he stopped to rest; and then the halt was but momentary, more to tighten his belt and shift his shot-gun from one shoulder to the other, than because he was tired. Soon after starting again, he noticed to his satisfaction that he had entered the slight depression which they had observed in the afternoon, and through which it was believed a river ran during the rainy season. Its course there was north to south, where it entered the Marañon. Thus the strength of one link in his theoretical chain had been proven; if the second white rock was directly north from the main river, it undoubtedly stood in the bed of this periodical waterway.

About this time he entered the region of the curious mounds and was able to remain in the little valley, for the waters had washed a way around each, not so deep as the channel, however, proving that a portion of the flow had soaked through the strangely formed hillocks.

At his two-thousandth step the boy noticed that the mounds had increased in size and were closer together. A hundred yards farther they appeared to be merged into one, which was several hundred

feet in circumference, and which appeared to be a little table-land, indented by the depression across its surface. At the opposite end from where he had entered the table-land, or rather on the opposite side of the circle, the river-bed swept in an angle to the east.

Perspiration stood in beads on his forehead; his heart beat wildly. Was he right? Was this little table-land, this mound larger than all the others, an elevation at the mouth of the mine? Was the decomposed wood under his feet the remains of trees which had been felled in the greatest number by the Ayulis, because of proximity to the treasure? If these facts were true, then where had the white rock stood? Why, at the point where the river of winter changed its course to the east; that was the most probable point, if the pillar that marked the mine opening bore north from the Marañon, as old Huayno had said.

It took him but a minute to reach this point, and once there he put down his rifle, then commenced to crawl on all fours over the little hillocks with which the big mound was dotted, striking the ground hard blows with his hammer. After having done this for a quarter of an hour or so he stopped, for he was almost out of breath, then when rested he moved to the other side of the depression, at a point a few yards beyond, where it turned east at

right angles. There his foot encountered something hard, and throwing himself down, he commenced feverishly to tear aside the vines and creepers that formed a covering. When they were removed he saw a dark brown rock that was covered over with decayed vegetable matter. Scraping this off, the lad made use of his little hammer, and after three or four blows a wonderful thing happened.

As the dirty brown shells of an oyster open and reveal an interior of pearly white, so the breaking of the rock showed a seam that was the color of milk.

Ferguson, standing guard near the Marañon, was wondering what kept Harvey so long and was blaming himself for permitting the lad to enter the woods unaccompanied at such an hour, when his attention was attracted by the crackling of underbrush some distance away, and then the sound of footfalls nearing him rapidly.

“Harvey’s on the run!” he ejaculated. “Wonder if it’s a puma this time, or what?” and swinging his rifle on his shoulder, he started at a double quick to the forest, where he met the boy, hatless and minus his shot-gun, just beyond the first line of trees.

He had no opportunity to make inquiries, for the lad waved a piece of rock the instant he caught sight of him and screamed : —

“I’ve found it! I’ve found it! Look at this! will you?”

It happened that the shelter-tent had not been erected in a very secure manner the evening before, for all hands had been too tired and discouraged; they had used a very thin piece of wood for a centre-pole. Therefore the result of a wild rush under the canvas by Ferguson and Harvey, both anxious to tell the cheering news, was the collapse of the cloth structure, and in the entangling folds three men and a boy were soon struggling. To add to the confusion, Hope-Jones, who had been dreaming of the Majeronas, imagined an attack was on, and reaching out for the fancied opponent nearest him, he commenced pommelling Ferguson lustily. The elder American, who was so imprisoned by the canvas that he could not defend himself, might have been seriously injured had not Señor Cisneros rolled himself free, and dragged the bellicose Englishman away. He then freed the others, and as Harvey was still breathing heavily, after the wild dash through the woods, he drew the boy to him, believing he had been injured.

"No, I'm not hurt," exclaimed the lad, panting. "Look, I have found the white rock over there in the woods! Here's a piece that I chipped off," and he exhibited the specimen of alabaster, to which he had held firmly.

Hope-Jones, who by this time had come to his senses, gave a yell of joy, and the captain, jumping

to his feet, caught Harvey by the shoulders in an embrace, then urged him to relate the details of his exploration.

Of course there was no thought of attempting to sleep again that night ; they did not even straighten up the shelter-tent. Hope-Jones and Ferguson favored starting at once in search of the treasure, but the captain said it would be wiser first to eat breakfast. " Besides," he added, " Harvey needs some rest."

So they built a fire and soon were enjoying tin cups of hot coffee and some broiled duck's meat — for the captain had snared wild fowl the evening before and had prepared it while on watch.

Although the moon was setting when the start was made from the camp, they pushed on quickly, for their watches told them that in another half hour dawn would come ; and when at last they reached the large centre mound and the point where Harvey had found the second white rock, a gray light was penetrating the woods.

* * * * *

Three happy men, and a boy who was even happier, sat around the camp-fire on the banks of the river Marañon that evening.

" You say the quartz is the richest you ever saw ?" asked Harvey.

"Yes, it is," and the captain lifted one of the many pieces they had brought from the mine as samples, and all looked at it for perhaps the hundredth time that day.

"How long do you think we had better remain here?" Ferguson inquired.

"Perhaps a fortnight. That will give us ample time in which to explore the property and stake it off."

Another member of the camp was a friendly Ayuli Indian, who had appeared on the bank as they emerged from the wood. He with others had been driven far from his village by the marauding band of Majeronas before the latter's encounter with the white men, and he was making a long detour on his return. They had detained him over night and on the morrow intended sending him with letters to Huari, from where they would be forwarded to Chicla and then to Callao.

CHAPTER XIII.

BELLA CACERAS RECOGNIZES A VOICE.

ONE evening early in November, 1879, several persons met at the home of John Dartmoor in Chucuito, a suburb in Callao.

From La Punta, a seaside resort, had come Captain and Mrs. Saunders, with their sons, Carl and Harold, the first-named a boy who was just graduating from his teens and the latter a much younger lad. Carl was the chum of Louis Dartmoor, Harvey's elder brother; and these three, Carl, Louis, and Harvey, had experienced many adventures in Callao Bay together. Another adult guest was Don Isaac Lawton, a courtly British colonial, editor of the *South Pacific Times*, a man greatly esteemed by both Mr. Dartmoor and Captain Saunders, indeed by all the American and English residents of Peru.

A younger visitor was Bella Caceras, whose name has appeared in earlier chapters. Seated beside her on a couch in the little parlor this evening was Rosita Dartmoor, whose strong resemblance

to her Peruvian mother was as marked as was her younger brother's resemblance to his American father.

A dinner had preceded the social evening, and the occasion of the gathering was to celebrate Rosita's fifteenth birthday. One who did not know how rapidly girls mature in these South American countries would have thought her several years older; indeed, in the United States she would readily have passed for a miss of eighteen or nineteen, and so would Bella Caceras, who was Rosita's age. Both girls wore long skirts, and in Peru they were considered old enough to enter society. This winter would have witnessed their *début*, had it not been for the circumstances of the times preventing the social entertainments that for years had marked Lima and Callao as gay cities of the West Coast.

Peru, in this November of 1879, was a nation of mourning, a country plunged in despair. Eight months before she had taken up arms against Chile, to prevent the latter's seizure of land to the south which was rich in nitrate of soda. Entering the contest with a well-equipped army and with a navy that was deemed by many the equal of the enemy's, she had met a series of reverses that were disheartening, and in this early summer month—the seasons below the equator are the reverse of those to the north—it was evident that the country's doom

was sealed, and that any day a conquering army might move from the south and besiege the capital.

Fate had been unkind to the northern republic. One month after hostilities had commenced, the largest war-ship, the *Independencia*, had been lost on a reef near Iquique while in pursuit of a little Chilean gunboat that was hardly worthy the capture. In October, the *Huascar*, a turret-ship of great power, had been surrounded off Point Angamos, while steaming north, by nearly all the ships of the Chilean fleet and had been captured after a bitter engagement, but not until nearly one-half of her crew had been killed and she had been set on fire in several places.

It was during this engagement that Grau, admiral of the Peruvian navy, had been killed ; and that is why Bella Caceras was in mourning, for he was her uncle. The loss of the *Huascar* had cast a gloom over all Peru, and the despair was heightened a few weeks later by the news that the gunboat *Pilcomayo* had been captured.

Meanwhile revolution had left its scar upon the country. Prado, the president, had fled to Europe, and an attempt by his ministers to form a government had been resisted by Don Nicolas de Pierola, who with a force of mountain men and some army and navy officers, who flocked to his standard, had attacked the palace in Lima, which they had cap-

tured after a bitter struggle ; and as a result, Pirola was at this time dictator of Peru. The land forces had not been more successful than had the maritime. Reverses had been met in the south, and orders had been given to concentrate troops in the vicinity of Lima, to take part in the defence of the capital ; for now that the Peruvian navy had been nearly annihilated, the ocean highway was clear, and it was possible for Chile to move transports as she wished.

Callao was the one strong point in the country. Defended by large modern guns in the castles, in the Chucuito forts, at Los Baños and at La Punta, the city was pronounced able to withstand any bombardment. But a blockade ! That was what the residents feared, for with a cordon of ships in the offing commerce could not be maintained ; supplies of food from the north and south and supplies from Europe, upon which the residents greatly depended, would cease.

As yet no Chilean ships had appeared off the port, except to reconnoitre, but rumors came from the enemy's country that a squadron for blockade duty was forming, and more heartrending than all was the report that machinists were busy on the *Huascar*, putting her in trim, and that she would form one of the fleet. At this news Peruvians gnashed their teeth with rage.

It would be bad enough to have the ironclads *Blanco Encalada* and *Almirante Cochrane* dominate the sea within their sight, but to be compelled to witness a little turret-ship, once the pride of the Peruvian navy, steam near San Lorenzo island at the entrance to the harbor, flying the lone star flag of the enemy, would be the last drop in the bitter cup.

The gloom which overspread the country had little part in John Dartmoor's home on this evening. They were all very happy, for any day they were expecting the return of Harvey from the interior, and a letter received from him had told them that his mission had been successful, even beyond their most fanciful expectations.

It was only the extreme of circumstances that had influenced Mr. Dartmoor to let his younger son undertake this hazardous trip. At the time of the lad's departure he had believed he could postpone the evil day for several months, but a few weeks later came the news of the naval engagement off Point Angamos and the defeat of the *Huascar*, which caused a financial panic in Callao and Lima, and among the many forced to the wall was the American iron merchant.

He bravely faced the storm and was ably assisted by his wife and children, who cheerfully accustomed themselves to the new life that was made necessary. They gave up their handsome home and moved into

a little cottage ; Mrs. Dartmoor yielded her jewels, that more money might be paid their creditors ; Rosita denied herself the pleasures which her father's wealth in former years had enabled her to enjoy, and Louis, believing that he should no longer be a burden at home, secured a position as purser's clerk on one of the steamers of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company.

A fortnight before this evening the same persons had met at Mr. Dartmoor's home to bid good-by to Louis, who had planned to sail on the morrow, and while they were gathered in the little parlor a clerk had arrived from the ship chandler's, where Mr. Dartmoor had found temporary employment, and had brought a letter received late in the afternoon. It was from Harvey, and the lad had written : —

“DEAR ONES AT HOME: I have found it, or rather we have found it. The mine is here, just where the old Inca said it would be found. Mr. Ferguson, who is somewhat versed in such matters, says that millions are buried. From the study that I have had, I know that our assays have shown twenty-five per cent gold to seventy-five per cent gross.

“Of course it is difficult to work this mine, because no means of transportation exist, but as Mr. Hope-Jones says, ‘Gold is gold,’ and there will be no lack of capital to exploit what we have found. This

letter I have written with the stub of a pencil, seated on the side of an ironwood tree. It is sent by a native, who has promised to take it to Chicla, from where it will be forwarded by post. We shall start home in about two weeks, after we have collected sufficient samples. My love for everybody, and I hope this letter will not arrive too late.

“ HARVEY.

“P.S. Please ask Rosita to tell Bella Caceras, the next time she sees her, that I have appreciated her gift very much. It has been a constant companion.”

The joy which the receipt of this letter had given them all can well be imagined. John Dartmoor saw the rehabilitation of his fortunes at no distant day, and the reinstatement of his wife and children in the life to which they had been accustomed. The letter had also made it unnecessary for Louis to go to sea, but as he had promised the superintendent of the steamship company to take the position, and as it would have been difficult to find another person competent for the place on such short notice, he had made one voyage to Panama, returning the evening before this entertainment in honor of his sister's birthday.

To another member of this party Harvey's news had also brought happiness and relief from worry.

Mr. Lawton had felt the burden of financial depression almost as much as had Mr. Dartmoor, and although he had weathered the first storm, yet every one knew that it was but the matter of a month or two before his publishing house would be compelled to close. The very day after the boy's letter came to Chucuito, Harvey's father had entered the editorial rooms and had said : —

“Don Isaac, can you hold out for a little while longer ?”

“Yes, I think I can,” was the reply. “But what is the use ? The end must come, and might as well happen now as later. Advertisers simply cannot pay their contracts, for all business is at a stand-still, and there is a straight loss in the circulation with the currency so depreciated.”

“Well, I wish you to hold on until Harvey returns.”

“Why so, my friend ?”

“Because I know that nothing would give my son more pleasure, after caring for his mother and sister, than advancing you all the money necessary to tide you over.”

“Do you think so, Dartmoor ?”

“Indeed I know it, and can promise it for him.”

“Thank God !” exclaimed the Britisher fervently, but in a choking voice. His eyes were unusually brilliant, for they had grown moist. He was a

bachelor, all his relatives were dead, and his newspaper was the one object that made life dear to him.

That evening Mr. Dartmoor said to his wife : " It seemed so strange for me to speak of Harvey lending money. But it is a fact, and he will really be lending it to us, for it will be his."

" I am certain you know Harvey better than that," Mrs. Dartmoor had replied. " You see if his very first act is not to insist that his interest be transferred to you."

" But I would not accept it."

" Nor should I wish you to. But he will have it arranged in some manner, that I know."

Although Captain Saunders was not in financial distress, for he was paid in gold by the American Board of Marine Underwriters, for whom he was agent on the West Coast, yet the letter from the interior had made him none the less happy than it had the others, for John Dartmoor was not only a close friend of his Peruvian life, but they had been chums in boyhood, even as their sons were at this time ; and for Don Isaac he had the same regard.

None of them in Chucuito permitted the news to alter their mode of living. Mr. Dartmoor remained at the desk in a ship chandler's, and with his wife and Rosita lived in the little cottage, waiting until the adventurers should return from the interior. The good news had been noised about in Callao and

Lima, and several offers had been made Mr. Dartmoor by persons anxious to advance money and secure a promise of an interest in the wonderful mine. But all these the American refused, saying that the property was not his, but his son's, and he did not wish to make any arrangements until the lad should return.

It will be noticed that Harvey in writing had refrained from making mention of the encounter with the Majeronas. He had done this so that his parents might not be alarmed. And he had said nothing concerning Señor Cisneros. So that all they knew was that the mine had been located, that it was rich in gold, and that the boy was well.

"Let's see, it's a little over two weeks since the letter came, is it not?" asked Captain Saunders on the occasion of this birthday entertainment.

"Yes, two weeks ago Tuesday."

"He said that they expected to leave within a fortnight?"

"Yes."

"Then he is due now at any time."

"I hardly expect him so soon," said Mr. Dartmoor. "The Indian runner, accustomed to the country, and having nothing to carry, would be able to make much better time through the mountains than Hope-Jones, Ferguson, and my son, burdened with their camp utensils, and with the samples of ore. So I

would not be surprised should another week elapse before their arrival."

"You are doubtless correct. I had not thought of those matters."

"Wouldn't it be jolly though if they should arrive unexpectedly to-night!" exclaimed Carl Saunders, and Louis added, "I should say so."

They were interrupted by a loud ring at the bell.

"I wonder if it can be possible!" exclaimed the elder Dartmoor boy, springing to his feet and rushing out into the hall. All conversation ceased, and they listened intently. But it was not the voice of Harvey that sounded when the door was opened. The tones, however, they recognized as those of a very dear friend, General Matajente, the smallest officer in the Peruvian army, a man who had been a captain in the navy during the administration of President Prado, but who had joined the land forces of Pierola and had rendered that leader such signal service that he had been rapidly promoted.

"Are your parents in?" they heard the general ask Louis, and the next minute he came hurriedly into the room, apologizing for having called at such a late hour, and expressing himself overjoyed at meeting so many of his friends at one time.

The general was an exquisite in the matter of dress, and wore black mustachios that were so long and stood out so prominently that he gave a person the

idea of a walking cross. Although he was much undersized, yet those who knew him never gave the matter of his height any thought, for he was a most courageous and pugnacious personage. Both Carl and Louis had seen him facing an enemy, and had marvelled at his quickness and his dexterity. They had been present on the *Pilcomayo*, which he once commanded, when the captain had fought a duel with a naval officer who was much his superior in physique, yet who had been in the hands of the little man as a mouse in the paws of a kitten. They had also seen him lead the famous cavalry charge in Lima, and sweep right into a battery of guns, sabring the artillerists until all the pieces were silenced. When they thought of these things, Captain Matajente, as they always called him to one another, appeared as a giant, rather than a dwarf, which he was in reality.

"Had we known that you were in the city, general, we should have sent you an invitation on behalf of Rosita," said Mr. Dartmoor.

"I know you would, and I am delighted that I happened in. The fact is I came from Lima only on the last train."

"Are you going to remain long?"

"Only over night," he replied. "I came to listen in detail to some remarkable adventures; as remarkable, I am sure, as any that ever happened to three

young men; and I came also, Mr. Dartmoor, to introduce my cousin, Anton Cisneros, a resident of Huari, who has journeyed to the coast on a business trip."

"I should be delighted ——"

Mr. Dartmoor was cut short by the entrance from the hallway of a tall, dark-featured Peruvian, clad in a long poncho and wearing heavy top-boots, who was presented to those who were in the parlor.

"Rosita," whispered Bella Caceras, "I believe that Harvey has returned. Look at the general. Don't you notice a twinkle in his eyes? And what is Louis waiting out in the hall for? I hear voices, Rosita! I tell you, it's your brother!" and the vivacious Peruvian girl darted from the room. A second later she gave a little scream of delight, then was heard to say: "I knew it! I knew it! Rosita, come here!"

"Ah! the little minx has spoiled my surprise!" said General Matajente to those in the parlor. "Harvey, come in and bring your friends!"

"Harvey here!" exclaimed Mrs. Dartmoor, rising quickly, and she ran to the door, followed by her husband.

Yes, Harvey was there, and so were Hope-Jones and Ferguson.

"Why, you have grown nearly a foot!" said Mr. Dartmoor, holding him off at arm's length after

the first welcome was over. "And you are almost black."

Then all fell to talking at once, as is usual on such occasions. General Matajente explained that he had met the travellers by chance as they were leaving the Oroya Railroad station in Lima, after coming in from Chicla. That was at five o'clock in the afternoon, and he had taken them to his home, where they had removed the stains of travel. He had been pleasantly surprised to find that the companion of their interior journey had been his cousin from Huari, and from him he had learned something of the adventures of the four. Anxious to hear the story in detail, and also to be a witness to the joyful reunion, he had accompanied them to Callao and on to Chucuito. He had planned that Harvey's entrance should be a surprise, but the keen ears of Bella Caceras had enabled her somewhat to turn the tables.

The five had dined in Lima, but were nothing loath to again sitting down at the board, and at ten o'clock all drew up chairs. Then, as every one insisted that the story of the adventures be told that night, Hope-Jones described their experience from Lima to Huari, and the captain took up the thread of the story from the time of their departure from the mountain town. Mrs. Dartmoor shuddered when the adventure with the puma was related,

and the girls turned pale. But when it came to the battle with the Majeronas, the details were listened to with breathless eagerness, and Harvey felt his mother's arm press him closer.

There were two scarlet faces in the room as the captain detailed the sequel to this fight and Harvey's narrow escape from death; and then, for the first time, the men learned who had been the donor of the pincushion that had stayed the arrow's flight, for Bella Caceras had jumped to her feet, and had run over to the boy's side when she heard how he had carried her little gift, and what it had done for him. The two were for several minutes the objects of many good-natured jests, but they bore them bravely, and, all being interested in hearing of the further discoveries, the narrative was resumed.

It was after midnight before everything had been told, and before they thought of rest. Mr. Dartmoor insisted that Señor Cisneros should remain with him, and that Hope-Jones and Ferguson also should stay. As the house was too small to accommodate all whom the genial American wished to accommodate, Captain Saunders invited General Matajente to go with him to La Punta, and he also urged that Louis join them as Carl's guest. This arrangement was finally agreed upon, and the party for La Punta withdrew, being accompanied as far as the little railway station by Don Isaac, who had

refused all invitations and had said that he would prefer to walk to his rooms in Callao.

“For,” he explained to Captain Saunders, “I feel a strange buoyancy to-night; even as if I were a boy again.”

The editor had good cause for this. A few minutes before good nights were said, he had been taken one side by Mr. Dartmoor, who had whispered:—

“I spoke to Harvey of my wish that you should share our good fortune, and he is enthusiastic at the idea.”

CHAPTER XIV.

BLOCKADE OF CALLAO HARBOR.

LOUIS DARTMOOR and Carl Saunders were early astir at the home of the latter's parents in La Punta the next morning. The Peruvian residence of the American captain was a suite of rooms in a large, rambling hotel, situated at the extreme tip of the narrow peninsula that juts into the Pacific west of Callao, and forms, with San Lorenzo Island, three miles distant, a shelter for the bay.

It was only a stone's throw from the hotel to the beach, and as was their frequent practice, the boys donned their bathing suits in the bedrooms, and running down the rear stairs, took a dip in the ocean before breakfast, diving through the inrushing breakers and swimming out some distance from the shore. They were in the water about a half hour and had returned to the rooms by half-past six. Faustina, Mrs. Saunders's cook, — the suite occupied by the Americans resembled in many respects the apartment house of the United States, inasmuch as

they had their independent kitchen and dining room, — had just arrived from Callao, and had put the water for the coffee over to boil. So the boys, having plenty of time on their hands before breakfast could be ready, dressed at their leisure, after a brisk rub-down with coarse towels, then went out on the broad veranda, where Louis told Carl of some of his experiences while on his one voyage as purser's clerk; then they began discussing the return of Harvey.

The veranda was unusually wide, even for a South American country, and ran the entire length of the hotel. From the north end it commanded a view of the bay and also of the entrance to the harbor, which was past the north end of San Lorenzo. The channel between that island and La Punta was so strewn with reefs as to be dangerous for any except very light-draught vessels. When they had reached the end of the veranda, a light mist had obscured most of the bay, and it was quite dense to seaward; but while they were talking this mist gradually disappeared under the influence of the sun's rays, and a breeze had commenced blowing from the south, so that within a quarter of an hour the waves had turned from a dull gray to bright indigo, except close in shore, where they broke in white foam before dashing on the stony beach.

Louis, happening to glance toward the end of San Lorenzo soon after this transformation was wrought,

seized Carl's arm and gave a yell as he pointed in the direction where ships round the headland to enter port. "Look! Look!" he said.

Carl did so, then gasped, "The Chileans!"

"Yes, the Chileans! The blockading fleet! One, two, three, four, five ships!"

"Oh, Louis!"

"Yes, Carl!"

"Isn't that the *Huascar*?"

"Great Scott! I believe it is! Our little *Huascar*, with the lone star flag at her gaff! Isn't that terrible!"

"And there's the *Pilcomayo* too. Think of it. The gunboat that Captain Matajente once commanded; and now he is perhaps asleep in our guest room. We must tell him and also tell father."

"Wait a minute, Carl. That's one of the big iron-clads, I guess; that one to the right of the *Huascar*. Wonder whether it's the *Blanco* or the *Cochrane*?"

"I don't suppose anybody can tell at this distance. They are sister ships, you know, and I heard father say they differed only in their superstructure. Whichever she is, she is the flagship, for I can make out the admiral's pennant at the fore truck. And look, a steam launch is putting off from her side and making for shore! Perhaps they are sending notice of a bombardment!"

The boys then hurriedly left the end of the veranda

and ran into the little parlor, then into the first bedroom, where they found Captain Saunders shaving. Both were too excited to say anything for a full minute, and the American, somewhat vexed at the intrusion, exclaimed : —

“Carl, you should not bring your friend in here, for I am not yet dressed.”

“But father — the Chileans — the Chileans — are — in the offing.”

“The Chileans! Who said so? It must be a bola!”¹

“But it’s not a bola, father. We have seen them ourselves. There are five ships — one of the big ironclads, the *Huascar*, the *Pilcomayo*, and two other vessels; all are steaming up and down.”

Captain Saunders placed the razor on the dresser, hurriedly washed his face, and went with the boys to the point from where they had viewed the fleet. They had no more than reached the end of the veranda than they heard the pattering of bare feet on the wood floor, and turning, saw General Matajente running toward them, exclaiming at the top of his voice: “What’s that I heard? The Chileños? Did any one say the Chileños were in sight?”

It was well for the boys that they had frequently

¹ Many false rumors and many grossly exaggerated reports were current up and down the coast during the Chile-Peruvian war, and these were designated by the term “bola.”

been impressed with the little general's prowess, else they might not have restrained their laughter at the sight which he had presented. Hearing their report of the enemy, he had jumped from his bed and had run without stopping to dress. The evening before, Captain Saunders had given him a pair of his pyjamas, and these the little general had been compelled to turn up both at the legs and arms, until the fold of the former reached to his knees and of the latter to his elbows. He was evidently accustomed to wearing a nightcap when at home, and such an article not being in the American's wardrobe, the Peruvian had tied his handkerchief over his head. Beneath this band of white his long, black mustachios stood out straight and his shaggy eyebrows protruded.

In his haste and excitement he pushed Carl and Louis one side, and to see the better, when he reached the place that commanded a view of the harbor entrance, he stood up on the foot-board of the rail. Then he broke out into violent exclamations.

"C-a-r-a-m-ba!" he hissed, "the audacity of them! To bring the *Huascar* here with their abominable flag flying! And my little *Pilcomayo*! My pride! My treasure! With dirty Chileños on her decks! C-a-r-a-m-b-a! It is too much! It is too much!"

Tears commenced to roll down his face, and he be-

came almost hysterical. The man who, during his lifetime, had faced death perhaps a hundred times without flinching, the man who, in the streets of Lima, had led a cavalry squadron right into the very centre of a battery, was sobbing like a child. But they understood those tears and also the convulsive chokings. They knew that not only sorrow, but anger, was struggling for utterance, and in addition to all was humiliation.

“They are coming ashore, coming to give notice !” he explained, noticing for the first time the little steam launch that was now some distance from the largest ship. “I hope that notice will be of a bombardment ; that they will engage the forts like men, and not skulk in the offing and destroy ships that cannot fight. O for one shot at them with the castle guns !”

He darted away from the railing and started for the stairs that led from the veranda to the main floor beneath.

“Where are you going, general ?” asked Captain Saunders, catching the little officer by the sleeve of his pyjamas.

“To the castles,” he replied.

“But you cannot go in this attire. Remember, you are not yet dressed.”

The Peruvian officer then realized for the first time that he had appeared in his night clothes, and

his one fault being his vanity, he became as humble as a reprimanded child when he appreciated what a sorry figure he had cut. To add to his confusion, Mrs. Saunders came from her rooms at that moment, and before her husband could reach her side and ask her to withdraw, she had taken a dozen steps in their direction. In his anxiety not to be seen, the general had stepped behind Carl, and had whispered to the boy: "Shield me! Shield me, I beg you!"

That was easy to do, for the youth was much taller than the officer, and considerably broader, so that, standing still, he completely hid the diminutive general, who remained quiet until Mrs. Saunders had left the balcony. Then, darting from behind his human barrier, he made haste by a side door to the room where he had passed the night.

A few minutes later Faustina announced that breakfast was on the table, and Carl and Louis at once sat down with Captain and Mrs. Saunders. Although the latter was much interested in the news of the advent of the Chilean fleet, she asked if General Matajente had been awakened, and suggested that they await his arrival. But Captain Saunders understood the officer so well that he knew he would not wish to present himself before the boys after his peculiar appearance, and he also realized that the Peruvian wished to reach Callao with all haste; so

he made excuses for him, and with his own hands carried a tray laden with edibles to his room.

"I shall go to Callao with our friend," he said, on his return. "It is necessary that I know at once what course the Chileans have decided to take."

"May we go with you?" Carl asked.

"Yes, if you hurry, for I shall not detain the general. The next dummy leaves in ten minutes. If you can catch that, you may go. But not so fast with your coffee, Carl. You will choke."

"What do you think they will do?" asked Mrs. Saunders.

"I hardly think they will bombard," he replied, "for they know the range of the guns in Callao, and they could not approach near enough to do any damage without exposing themselves to the Peruvians' fire. So I expect they will send notice of a blockade. However, it may be of a bombardment, and in that event, Louise, we shall have to move to Lima to-night. So immediately after breakfast, you had better call in Faustina and pack the trunks; then we shall be ready for any emergency."

"What if they declare a blockade?" his wife asked.

"Then our future actions will depend greatly upon its nature. If a close blockade be declared, one that will prevent the entry of any vessels until the war is

ended, I believe it would be wise for you to leave at once for the States with the children."

"Oh, father, please don't send me. Let me remain with you."

"Would you not wish to go with your mother, Carl?"

"Yes, of course, but ——"

"If I should have to go, let him stay with you," Mrs. Saunders said. "I can understand exactly how he feels about leaving now. He would be a companion for you, dear; and besides, the experience would be valuable."

"Well, well, we shall see about it later. Matters may not come to such a pass that it will be necessary for anybody to go. Are you ready, boys? Then join me at the dummy, and I will walk over with the general. Pardon him, Louise, if he does not come in to say good-by; he is quite put out by the course of events."

A half hour later the four had reached Callao, and Captain Saunders, with Carl and Louis, went direct to the editorial rooms of the *South Pacific Times*, knowing that there they would hear the first reliable news; and General Matajente went to the office of the captain of the port. In Mr. Lawton's apartments they found Mr. Dartmoor and Harvey, and several other American and English residents of Callao, all assembled for the same purpose. Harvey at once joined his brother and their chum.

"Where are Hope-Jones and Ferguson?" asked Louis.

"They left early this morning for Lima, by the first train, I believe; before we knew the Chileans had been sighted. And I want to know, Louis, why you didn't tell me last night that the *Huascar* and the *Pilcomayo* had been captured while I was in the interior? It came as a great shock this morning."

"That's so, Harvey. I confess I had completely forgotten that you were not as well posted as we. But tell me, does father think that this will make any difference with your mine?"

"Don't call it *my* mine, Louis. It belongs to us all; or rather, it is father's, and that is just the same thing."

"Well, does he think the arrival will interfere much with your plans?"

"No. He is rather glad than otherwise that the fleet has come, for he believes it will hasten the end. Of course, it will be impossible for us to do anything until peace shall be declared, that is, to commence any mining; so the sooner Peru yields the better."

"In the meantime, what are you going to do?" asked Carl.

"Señor Cisneros will return to the interior this week with a surveyor and a deputy from the mining bureau, so as to comply with the law and perfect our claim, and some one will go to either New York or

London and interest capital, in order that we may have the ready money with which to secure machinery and bring the ore to the coast. In the meantime, we shall be able to borrow sufficient from one of the banks here to pay all preliminary expenses."

"Who will go to New York?"

"That I don't know. We have arranged to hold another meeting to-night at Chucuito and decide."

Their attention was attracted by the entrance of an officer in the service of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company, who had come from the office of the captain of the port.

"Has the Chilean launch arrived at the mole?" asked Don Isaac, eagerly; and the others pressed near.

"It has. And the admiral has served notice on all interests that he intends maintaining a close blockade. Non-combatants will be allowed forty-eight hours in which to leave; after that no vessel, sail or steam, will be permitted to enter port or depart. So my ship, gentlemen, will be the last to leave."

Hearing this, Captain Saunders jumped to his feet, and beckoning Carl to his side, bade him come, and the two hurriedly left the room.

"What's the matter, father?" the boy asked, as they walked rapidly across the plaza.

"Didn't you hear Captain Brown say that his ship would be the last to leave Callao?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then I have no time to lose in securing a passage for your mother, Harold, and yourself. The boat will be crowded; hundreds will apply who will not even be able to get berths. By going to the office at once, I can perhaps reserve a stateroom."

"Father, I wish you would let me remain with you."

"Do you know what it means, Carl, to be in a blockaded city with all supplies cut off?"

"I can imagine, father; but I should like very much to stay with you. Besides, I am some little help in the office, am I not?"

"Yes. But with a blockade established, no ships will come in, and I shall have nothing to do."

"Then, isn't that a reason for my remaining? You will be very lonely, and should have one of your sons by your side."

Captain Saunders smiled. "Very well put, Carl," he said, "but I wonder how much Louis and Harvey have to do with your anxiety to remain? But you may do as you wish, and I shall reserve a stateroom for your mother and Harold. Now that this is settled, I wish you to take the next dummy back to La Punta, and tell your mother what has occurred; then help her all you can with the packing. I shall

be home early this afternoon," and he turned in the direction of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company's offices, while his son kept on to the railroad station.

As Captain Saunders was leaving, after having secured the quarters on the Panama steamer, he met John Dartmoor and Señor Cisneros.

"Are you going to send Mrs. Dartmoor to the States?" he asked.

"No. I should like to, but she and Rosita would prefer to remain and move to Lima in the event of open hostilities. The señor and I are about to engage a berth for some one who must go to the States and arrange to secure working capital for our mine. Saturday's boat will be the last out, you know."

"Yes, so I heard Captain Brown say, and I came here at once to engage passage for Mrs. Saunders."

"I am very sorry to learn that she is going, but I think you are wise. We may see some pretty tight times here."

"There's little doubt of it."

"Are both boys going?"

"No, Carl remains with me."

"That will delight Louis and Harvey. And by the way, Saunders, I am going to move back to my old home in Chucuito this week. Suppose you and Carl come and live with us after Mrs. Saunders and Harold leave ; or at least make us a visit."

“I should be very pleased, Dartmoor ; that is, to visit until I can find suitable quarters.”

“Do so, then.”

That evening a meeting was held of those interested in the Bella mine—for so Captain Cisneros had insisted upon naming the property after he had learned the true story of the pincushion in Harvey’s pocket. It was decided that both Hope-Jones and Ferguson should go to New York, for the purpose of interesting capitalists ; that Señor Cisneros should return to the interior, and that Mr. Dartmoor should attend to the company’s interests in Callao and Lima.

So it happened that when the last steamship sailed from Callao before the blockade commenced, Harvey waved an adieu from a small boat to the two young men with whom he had passed such adventurous times in the interior ; and from another boat Captain Saunders and Carl fluttered handkerchiefs and were answered with love signals waved by Mrs. Saunders and Harold.

CHAPTER XV.

DARNING THE NEEDLE.

THE darkest period in Peruvian history was the year 1880. Defeated on sea and on land, the nation had drawn its forces toward the centre and awaited a final struggle near historic Lima, the City of the Kings.

But the Chileans, triumphant, were in no haste to follow up the victories of Tarapacá, Tacna, Arica, and Point Angamos ; they realized the enervating influences that always are at work in an army that is inactive and on the defensive ; and although as early as January nothing hindered the northward movement of their land forces, they refrained from striking the decisive blow, and passed the time perfecting the transport service, increasing the efficiency of the troops and laying by stores of munitions of war.

The blockade of Callao, established toward the close of 1879, was maintained without interruption, and the harbor, which only two years before had been second only to San Francisco in commercial

importance on the west coast of the Americas, became a drear waste of water, for not a vessel, of sail or steam, was permitted to enter, unless it might be an occasional war-ship of a neutral power ; nor could any craft depart after the expiration of the forty-eight hours which the Chilean admiral had given as notification.

During those two days and two nights, craft of all description and flying flags of all nations prominent in the maritime world put to sea and sailed north or south, some laden, but the majority in ballast ; and when the last one had departed and the enemy's cordon was close drawn in the offing, the Bay of Callao reflected only one story — the death of commerce.

Where two hundred ships had swung at anchor, a Peruvian sloop or an abandoned bark rose sluggishly with the ground swell ; where once was seen the men-of-war of the Peruvian navy, awaiting the word from Lima to dash south, now appeared only the wooden corvette *Union*, the obsolete coast defence monitor *Atahualpa*, and the school-ship *Maria Theresa* ; once there was constant danger of collision in the harbor, because of the press of small boats — cutters, gigs, and barges, propelled by oars ; steam launches darting here and there, whistles blowing lustily ; lighters moving slowly as long sweeps were pushed, and sail-boats gliding with white wings outstretched, — now

the appearance of even a rowboat caused conjecture.

Before Harvey's departure for the interior, the bay had been a never ending source of delight to the three boys; indeed, it had appealed to all foreign residents, as well as to the natives, but to none more than to the members of the Callao Rowing Club, for the placid waters permitted their going some distance from the shore, even in the racing shells, and the trade wind not reaching the water near the beach line, and the surface not being ruffled, it was possible to feather the spoon oars by sliding them, even as is done on pond and river. After the blockade was established, Carl, Louis, and Harvey occasionally went out for spins; but the wide waste of harbor had little attraction, and they soon abandoned visits to the boat-house at Los Baños, preferring to take their recreation in the fields, on horseback, or in some of the games that had been introduced from the United States and England.

Other members of the club felt the same about rowing in the bay; and a fortnight after the Chilean vessels appeared in the offing, the governing board decided to close the boat-house until peace should be declared and normal conditions be restored in Callao. So the shells, practice boats, canoes, and the sail-boat were carefully housed in the large covered barge that was anchored a short distance from

shore ; the doors were securely fastened, and Pedro, the keeper, was told he would have to seek other employment. The members removed their effects from the lockers in the apartments which had been rented from the owner of the Baños del Oroya, and the lease to these shore quarters was surrendered. But the Callao Rowing Club did not disband. The organization was maintained, and to-day it is a flourishing athletic association, famous up and down the West Coast.

In naval parlance ships are "darning the needle" when they steam back and forth before a harbor, out of the reach of shore batteries, yet near enough to prevent entrance and departure of vessels. This is what the Chileans did day after day, week after week, and month after month, and it became an accustomed sight to see their low, black hulls in the offing, steam rising lazily from the funnels.

The vessels first on blockade duty were the *Blanco Encalada*, which flew the admiral's pennant, the *Huascar*, the *Angamos*, the *Pilcomayo*, and the *Mathias Cousino*. Others were added after a time, and there were frequent changes in the squadron; but the little *Huascar* was kept on the station as an aggravation to the Peruvians. The *Angamos* was a cruiser of a modern type and armed with one rifle gun, which, reports said, could throw a shell from Callao to Lima — eight miles.

The monotony of the blockade was broken after the first month by a short bombardment of Callao, which was brought about by the Chucuito forts opening upon a steam launch from the *Blanco Encalada*, that ran in close to La Punta, evidently to reconnoitre the shore battery there. The shots from the land guns were fired at six o'clock in the evening, and the Chilean squadron steamed into the harbor one hour later. The first broadside from out in the bay was followed by a panic in the sea-coast city and a wild rush of the residents to escape into the environs. Among the thousands who fled from their homes were Mr. Dartmoor and the members of his family and Captain Saunders and Carl. After that exciting night, most of which was passed in the fields, they and many others moved to Lima and only visited Callao during the day.

Little damage was done by the bombardment; only a few houses were destroyed, and no loss of life was reported. But the brief engagement was signalled by as remarkable an incident as any ever related concerning war times, and the story thereof is told in Callao to this day. Immediately after dinner that evening the daughter of an American bookseller sat down before the piano in the parlor of her father's home and commenced playing. After rendering one of Mozart's compositions she swung around on the stool, in order that she might easily

reach for more sheet music, and the motion brought her feet and lower limbs from beneath the instrument. At that instant the *Blanco Encalada* opened fire out in the bay, and a shot from one of her guns, flying shoreward, pierced the side of this residence, cut through the piano stool, as neatly as would a buzz-saw, crushed the lower part of the piano, and made its exit through another wall. The young woman fell upon the floor unharmed. Had she not swung partly around her legs would have been shot away. No other residence of any consequence was struck that night, the dwellings destroyed being ramshackle structures.

One week later an attempt was made at midnight to destroy the monitor *Atahualpa* with a torpedo, but side-nets had been lowered around the war-ship, and the submarine engine was caught in the meshes, where it exploded, throwing water on board. The report caused alarm in the city, but investigation proved that no damage had been done. Attempts were made later in January to destroy the *Union*, and they also failed. Short bombardments became of more frequency, and those who remained in Callao grew accustomed to the gun-fire and the whistling of shot and shell.

Thus passed the late summer and early spring of 1880. With each succeeding week the value of food products increased, for no supplies came into port,

and the irrigated lands were not of sufficient area to furnish all vegetable products that were required. Demand was made on the interior, but the means of transportation were so poor that articles thus brought commanded almost prohibitive prices. Eggs were sold for two and three dollars a dozen, and meat became worth almost that sum per pound; potatoes, even in the land of their birth, brought fancy prices, and milk and butter were soon not obtainable. But rice and corn were in plenty, so that, although the majority were compelled to deny themselves a variety of diet, there was no fear of starvation.

CHAPTER XVI.

JOHN LONGMORE'S REVENGE.

SEÑOR CISNEROS returned from the interior toward the latter end of January, and immediately after the report of the surveyor and the deputy inspector had been filed, a patent was issued to the Bella Mining Company of Callao and New York, to dig ores from the district which had been chartered and to extract precious metals therefrom.

Beyond this action, which secured the claim, nothing could be done until peace should be declared. Hope-Jones and Ferguson undoubtedly had interested capitalists of the United States, but it was impossible for the Englishman and American to re-enter Callao; and it was equally impossible for them to communicate with their associates in Peru, because all mail service had ceased with the establishment of the blockade.

The fact that mining operations had been delayed did not greatly inconvenience the Dartmoors, for the banks of Lima were only too glad to come to their

assistance. And at that period occurred a demand for agricultural implements, so great that the receiver who had control of the bankrupt hardware store reported rapidly increasing business, notwithstanding the fact that Callao was often under fire; and with the consent of local creditors he engaged the former owner of the establishment to conduct the new trade, which promised soon to pay all indebtedness and leave a profit.

Mr. Dartmoor regretted that he had not sent his wife and children to the States, when he saw how the war promised to drag along; and Captain Saunders was sorry that he had not insisted upon Carl going north with his mother. But the boys were very well satisfied to remain. Not a day passed without some excitement—the firing upon forts and the attacks on war-ships at anchor, and the kaleidoscopic panorama of Lima, which was the centre of a brilliant army corps.

The Dartmoors lived in the capital until the latter part of June, when the bombardments having practically ceased, they reopened the house at Chucuito and lived there part of the time. Mrs. Dartmoor and Rosita would pass several days in each week in the spacious suburban home, returning to Lima in the evening; but Louis and Harvey would frequently remain all night, and usually Carl Saunders was with them. Although the boys enjoyed life in Lima for

a season, they were happier near the ocean, for all three were splendid swimmers, and every morning they could run over to the Santa Rosa beach and have a dip before breakfast.

On one of these occasions—it was the morning of July 3—they left home somewhat earlier than usual; indeed, it was a half hour before dawn, for they had been asked to go to Callao immediately after breakfast and assist on their father's books.

“Whew!” exclaimed Louis, as they emerged from the house. “It's rather cold for a dip, isn't it?”

“The water is warmer than the air, fortunately,” said Carl, who had been a visitor for nearly a fortnight with his chums.

“And a brisk run will put us in condition,” added Harvey. “So let's be off!”

They started at a swinging pace to cover the quarter mile, which was the width of the peninsula at this point, and leaving behind them the rough breakers of Mar Bravo, in which no man could live, they rapidly neared the more peaceful shore on the bay side, where bathing was safe for those who could swim.

But they did not take a “dip” on this morning; instead they became witnesses to a tragedy, one of the tragedies of history.

For, as the lads swung down beneath the Santa Rosa fort, toward the line where the rollers break,

they saw a number of forms gathered on the beach, and a sentinel's call to "halt" brought them to a sudden stand.

An officer came running up, a very small officer, who, as soon as he saw who the intruders were, exclaimed, "Good morning, boys"; and recognizing General Matajente, they at once felt at their ease.

"You are out rather early, are you not?" he asked. "But you are in time to witness something that I am sure will interest you. How would you like to see the *Blanco Encalada* blown out of water?"

This question was asked in a whisper; and without waiting for it to be answered, the diminutive general turned and walked down to the beach, closely followed by the three thoroughly astonished and interested lads.

A dozen officers and a score of soldiers and sailors were gathered near the water line; but towering above them all was a figure that the boys at once recognized in the growing light, and Harvey, exclaiming: "Why that's John Longmore! I haven't seen him since the *Huascar* was captured!" darted forward and seized his old-time friend by the hand.

The man thus addressed had once been a recluse on San Lorenzo Island, having lived there in solitude from the time of his wife's death until the outbreak of the war with Chile. He was an American by

birth, but he had so loved his Peruvian wife, for whom he had abandoned the sea, that for her sake he had sworn allegiance to this South American country.

When war had been declared he enlisted on board the *Huascar* and was one of the crew during all her famous engagements. Wounded during the fight off Point Angamos, he was sent home; and soon thereafter he followed Captain Matajente into the ranks of Pierola's forces, and took part in the famous charge upon the artillery in Lima.

The boys had known him while he lived on San Lorenzo Island, frequently rowing over to the rugged place where his hermit's hut was perched; they had been with him during some of the exciting scenes of the early war and had witnessed his daring in Lima. But since old John had become a captain in the Peruvian army they had not met him as frequently, and a week before Harvey's return he had been sent north on recruiting duty; so the lad had not been able to greet him until this morning.

He grasped Harvey cordially by the hand, exchanged a few words with him, then with Carl and Louis, and finally saying, "You are just in time," he left them to attend to the work in hand.

A remarkable sight met their gaze when they turned from greeting their old-time friend to learn what was going forward. For a space of several

yards the beach appeared to have been transformed into a market stall. The sand and stones were covered with meats and fresh vegetables, of a quality that would have made them tempting even before the blockade had transformed ordinary food products into delicacies, and of a quantity that bespoke a large outlay of money. Rich red shoulders of beef, the fat white and firm, told of the slaughter of a young Andean bull ; rounded joints of lamb and mutton spoke of importations from the fertile grazing lands of the interior. Quail, snipe, and plover, which all knew must have come from the mountain valleys, were piled promiscuously, and so were barnyard fowl of the western slope. There was much green stuff in sight—corn, sweet potatoes, cauliflower, and beans ; baskets were filled with tomatoes, paltas, and the tempting chirimoyas.

The boys looked upon all this in astonishment, marvelling equally concerning the use to which it was about to be put, and the means by which it had been procured. In the rapidly growing light, they saw other strange sights—articles in marked contrast with the wealth of edibles : barrels marked “gunpowder” and kegs filled with even more powerful explosives. Near these was a peculiar machine, resembling druggists’ scales inverted, and minus the weighing pans. Drawn up on the beach, so that only the stern rested in the water, was a

large lighter. A number of sentinels surrounded this strange conglomeration and also the soldiers, sailors, and officers of both army and navy, who were gathered near.

"Harvey," said General Matajente, approaching the boys, "it's lucky you came. Can you tell us what time the tide turns? Since Captain Longmore and I left the navy, to join the land forces, we have not kept posted on such matters."

It was not unusual for persons to appeal to the younger Dartmoor boy for information concerning conditions in the bay. For three years before going into the interior, he had made them a special study, and had found that the information so gained aided him greatly when acting as coxswain in regattas. After removing from Lima to Chucuito, he had resumed these observations, probably more from force of habit than other reason, and so he was able to answer promptly, "At twenty-nine minutes after six, sir."

"Then we have no time to lose. Captain, as this is your idea, I wish you to take command here and carry out your plans."

At the order from General Matajente, Old John — the boys could not think of him save as Old John, the sailor, although he was now an artillery officer — stepped forward, and by his command work was begun. The object of their endeavor at first

puzzled the lads, but in a few minutes all became quite clear.

Sailors and soldiers rolled the barrels and kegs of explosives to the side of the lighter, and the larger ones were lifted into the hull and placed amidships. Also into the hull went Old John, who was handed the peculiar mechanical contrivance, and the boys, who were permitted to peer over the sides, saw him make fast the base to the floor of the craft, then busy himself adjusting the arms, to one of which they saw a spring had been attached. The kegs of explosives were now passed in and placed nearer the peculiar machine than had been the barrels, then Captain Longmore, still remaining within the lighter, directed that the provisions be handed to him.

The more bulky of these, such as the shoulders of beef, were distributed on the bottom of the boat, but arranged in such a manner that portions of their surface would show above the mass of green stuff that was soon thrown in. Although the beef, mutton, potatoes, cauliflower, and the other vegetables were stowed away in bow and stern with apparent carelessness, more attention was given to the placing of the products amidships, in the vicinity of the explosives, and above the mechanism a space about a foot in diameter was kept open.

The game, the fruit, and the smaller vegetables were placed in tempting array on top of the coarser

products, and after adjusting the edibles to his satisfaction, John Longmore sprang out and called all the sailors round him.

“ Now, in with her, men ! But carefully, so as not to dislodge the cargo ! Wade out beyond the line of breakers and hold her there, steady, until I come.”

They formed ten deep on each side of the craft, and slowly pushed her down the beach and into the water ; then, following orders, they waded out until the bow was about ten feet from shore. The big boat rose and fell on the glassy rollers, and was kept in place by the sailors, who held firmly to the gunwales.

“ What time is it, sir ? ” asked Old John.

“ Exactly half-past six,” replied General Matajente.

“ Then the tide has turned and is on the ebb. Shall I let her go, sir ? ”

“ Yes, if all is in readiness.”

“ In a moment, sir, as soon as I attach this,” and he held up a percussion cap ; “ and this,” and he displayed a small shoulder of lamb.

Strange combination ! thought the boys as they saw these last articles needed to complete the engine of death that was about to be set sailing under the most alluring flag of peace — agriculture ; and they watched intently as the gaunt seaman strode through the surf to the side of the lighter, then climbed on board.

The morning was misty, but at such a short distance from shore he was easily discernible, bending over and moving his hands and arms. He was not engaged in this for more than two minutes, then he dropped over the side, and called out, "Push her off, men !"

Old John waded ashore, and the lighter, loaded with explosives and disguised with market gardeners' truck, with the choice from butchers' stalls, with delicacies from the fruiterers ; yes, even with a few flowers, which were strewn carelessly on top, as if placed there by some one who had given them as a memento to the owner of the cargo — this engine of death drifted slowly into the mist, out toward the sea, borne by the ebb tide.

The artillery captain spoke for a moment with General Matajente, then turned to the boys and bade them good-by, saying that he must go to the castles.

"But first, won't you please tell us what you did when you went on the lighter while the men were holding her?" asked Harvey. "We saw what was done on shore, but cannot understand what followed."

"Certainly, my lad. You noticed that I carried a percussion cap and a shoulder of lamb?"

"Yes."

"I placed the meat on the arm of the machine to which the spring is made fast, and the percussion cap



"The engine of death drifted slowly into the mist."



upon an open keg of powder, beneath the other arm. Do you understand?"

"Yes, I think so. When the piece of lamb is lifted the spring will fly up, the opposite arm will descend, explode the cap, and ——"

"Exactly," the captain said.

"But could not a person see all this arrangement and suspect something?" asked Louis. "You left quite a space there."

"That is all filled in, and I put the most tempting game and fruit right above the powder."

"Then," said Carl, slowly, "you expect the boat will drift far out in the bay; will be sighted by one of the ships on blockade; that an attempt will be made to take the stuff on board, and all hands will be blown to kingdom come?"

"That is what I hope, my lad."

"It's horrible!" said Harvey.

Old John laughed in a peculiar manner and walked away.

As the boys were going slowly up the beach, Carl said: —

"Did you notice the change in Old John? I believe he's insane."

"So do I," said Louis.

"And I," echoed Harvey. "The old whaler we once knew on San Lorenzo couldn't have planned such a trick."

They had not gone far before they were joined by General Matajente. He walked on in silence until they reached the La Punta road, then they heard him mutter : —

“I don’t like it one bit, boys ; I don’t like it one bit.”

“Don’t like what, general ? ”

“That business down on the beach.”

“Why then did you permit it, sir ? ”

“Orders, my boy, orders. It was not the old boatswain who suggested the plan to a naval officer, but a captain in the artillery arm who went to headquarters. John Longmore told the people in the palace at Lima of his plan, and I was sent down here to oversee the operations.”

“Then you do not approve of what has been done ? ”

“Orders, my boy, orders,” was his only reply.

CHAPTER XVII.

JOHN LONGMORE'S REVENGE (*continued*).

WHEN the sun was an hour high the mist faded away ; the gray mantle disappeared, and Callao Bay became of two colors, a green within the space of an imaginary arc extending from the tip of La Punta to Los Baños, and a blue beyond, as far as San Lorenzo, where it merged into the indigo of the immensity of waters.

Upon the surface of the green, circling around occasionally when caught by a surface current, but steadily moving with the tide, was a market gardener's lighter, crowded from keel to gunwales with every variety of produce. Such a sight had not been witnessed for more than six months, not since those ships, discernible far in the offing, had enforced the closing of the port. Before that time these lighters had been frequently rowed and sailed over the bay, moving toward the heart of the city from the fertile region of the Rimac on the north.

When men saw what manner of craft was adrift

they rubbed their eyes, to make sure that sleep was not with them and conjuring a fanciful vision in a dream. No, the boat was still there, rising and falling on the slowly undulating rollers and moving ever toward the open. Then between La Punta's tip and the northern shore perhaps a dozen persons sprang into skiffs, whitehalls, and wherries, and let fall oars to race for the prize.

"Halt!" called a soldier standing on the beach near the big, smooth guns on The Point.

"Halt!" An infantryman levelled his rifle beneath the forts at Chucuito.

"Halt!" yelled a red-uniformed guard, stationed on the mole in Callao.

"Halt!" A boatman who was pushing off from Los Baños dropped his oars and came back on shore.

"Halt! Halt! Halt!" was heard at intermediary points, for around all the sweep of land bordering the bay stood sentinels, and their orders were to permit no man's interference with the progress seaward of that lighter laden with garden truck.

From these guardsmen was learned the nature of the craft that was so jealously watched, and the news spread with lightning rapidity over the city of Callao, to Bella Vista and haciendas adjoining, to Miraflores, to Chorillas, and all over Lima; and from there it was wafted up the mountains to Chosica and even to Matucana.

Peru was to be revenged ! That was the keynote of the message, and then followed in more or less exaggerated form an account of what had been done and what was the expected sequel. Revenge ! After having been humiliated in the south by many defeats, after suffering from blockade — which is a thumb-screw torture inflicted by one nation upon another — and after being insulted by the flaunting in their face of the lone star flags hoisted on the *Huascar* and the *Pilcomayo* ; after all these had occurred and all this time had elapsed, Peru was at last to be revenged !

The Chilean fleet would be blown out of the water before noon ! This was the word which was sent from mouth to mouth.

Early risers, who were on the streets soon after dawn, — venders of water and venders of such scant green stuff as could be obtained, — hurried to the shore and dotted the beach here and there, gazing seaward expectantly. All that day jackasses wandered unattended around the streets of Callao, braying mournfully, and bearing on their backs casks that had been filled from the river Rimac, or baskets that contained plantains and coarse vegetables.

In a few minutes these hucksters and providers of the day's drinking supply were joined by other men, persons who lived near the beach and had run from breakfast tables when the news had reached

them ; some were only half dressed, for they had jumped from their beds at the summons. Then from out all the streets of the seacoast city poured a throng, and men were joined by women and children. A solid human line marked the entire waterfront, and behind it formed others. Balconies of buildings that faced the sea were rented that morning, and then space in windows was sold. Callao's shore line was the tier of a gigantic amphitheatre ; the bay was the arena.

A severe earthquake shock is followed by an exodus from the seacoast to Lima, which is on high ground and beyond reach of a tidal wave. At such times all manner of equipages are pressed into service ; railroad trains are overcrowded, and those who cannot ride in car or carriage, on horses or mules, run or walk along the road. But no flight from the coast to Lima ever equalled the outpouring from the City of the Kings toward Callao on this morning of July 3, 1880 ; and within two hours after the lighter had been pushed from the Chucuito beach the depopulation of the capital commenced, and a wave of humanity swept down the highway and spread out over the pampas country.

After taking leave of General Matajente, the boys had directed their steps toward the Dartmoor residence on the Mar Bravo side of the peninsula, and realizing each minute more and more vividly the

stupendousness of the impending tragedy, they increased their speed accordingly, until, when the house was reached, they were running as fast as they could; and bounding up the stairs, two and three at a time, they burst into the dining room, reaching there nearly out of breath.

Mr. Dartmoor was at breakfast, and with him at table was Captain Saunders, who had been his guest over night. The men listened in astonishment to the recital, and at its conclusion the iron merchant said : —

“No business can be transacted this day. We may as well go to Callao and witness this deplorable attempt at destruction of life and property.”

“You may well say deplorable,” remarked Captain Saunders. “Torpedo warfare is to be regretted under any circumstances. But against the modern engines of destruction, which are projected beneath the water, the enemy has some means of defence. He may let down nets at the sides and entangle the projectile, or by continual vigilance keep his ship from being struck. Against this bomb-laden market boat there is no defence, except accidental discovery of its true character. It is an abominable trap, and if any one is killed thereby, it will be cold-blooded murder.”

“You say that General Matajente did not approve the action?” asked Mr. Dartmoor.

"Indeed he did not, sir. His expression told us more than did his words, however. He seemed to be thoroughly disgusted."

"I should expect as much from him, and I believe that Peru as a nation will not approve such methods of warfare. Let us hope this attempt will not succeed. I am surprised, though, boys, that your old friend should have conceived such a plot."

"That man, John Longmore, is insane," said Captain Saunders, with emphasis. "He has been insane ever since he received that sabre cut on board the *Huascar*. He is a monomaniac in his hatred of Chileans."

"We noticed his peculiar actions this morning, father," said Carl.

The boys were hastening their breakfast while this conversation was taking place, and announced themselves ready for departure as soon as their fathers pushed back chairs from the table.

"If this succeeds, it will be deplorable for another reason than the immediate loss of life," said the captain, rising.

"You mean because of a postponement of peace negotiations?"

"Yes."

"I fear you are correct."

"How will it affect the peace negotiations, sir?" Louis asked.

“Because the Chileans will become so incensed that they will not listen to the propositions for arbitration which have recently been made by commissioners sent from Washington. Not only that,” said Captain Saunders, “but any hope of Chile abandoning her idea of territorial annexation will be gone. I prophesy that if this lighter, armed and equipped by John Longmore, does any considerable damage in the Chilean fleet, that Peru will pay for it with the province of Tarapacá.”

“The richest province?” said Harvey.

“Yes, my lad, the richest nitrate of soda country in the world.”

By this time they were on the plank road that leads from Chucuito to Callao, and after a brisk walk of fifteen minutes reached the business section. They were too early to meet the mass of humanity that later surged through all the streets; but they encountered some hundreds of persons who were rushing toward the water-front.

“This will be a gala day,” remarked Captain Saunders.

“Yes, until the truth is known,” was Mr. Dartmoor’s reply. “Then you will see a reaction and genuine sorrow. I know these people, I have lived among them since we parted company in the States, immediately after the war—and,” he added in a low tone, “I married one of them.”

"Pardon me, my old friend," said Captain Saunders, "I did not intend to wound your feelings. I was not speaking bitterly of the Peruvians as a people, but of those who are responsible for this action to-day."

"You must remember that an American suggested it."

"That is true, John, but he is insane, I am certain. Those who gave it the stamp of approval are the guilty ones."

They had reached the large building owned by the English Railroad Company, and the boys, who had walked somewhat in advance, stopped in front of the entrance to the flight of steps and looked back inquiringly.

"Yes," said Captain Saunders, in reply, "go ahead." Then he added, "There's no better place, is there?"

"No. We may as well go up here."

The railroad building was situated on the beach, and a broad balcony on the second floor jutted out over the water. This veranda and nearly all the rooms on the floor were leased by the English Club. From no place, except the tip of La Punta, could a better view be obtained of the bay.

Mounted on tripods at both ends of this open space were two large telescopes ; numerous marine glasses were on tables. For years, until 1880, these club-

rooms had been a favorite place for captains of the merchant marine and naval officers to lounge during afternoons, and they had been no less enjoyed by the Anglo-Saxon residents of Callao and Lima.

The boys hurried to the railing as soon as they had reached the veranda and looked seaward. Out in the offing, darning the needle, were six ships on blockade duty. About a mile from shore, heading well out from the Chucuito beach, was what appeared to be a small boat. They knew it was the lighter, and glances which each in turn took through one of the telescopes showed that the cargo of vegetables and meats had not been disturbed. It was the only craft moving on the bay. At anchor, but safe under the forts, were the monitor *Atahualpa*, the corvette *Union*, and the training ship *Maria Theresa*, remnants of the Peruvian navy. Within the new pier were perhaps a score of vessels, tied up until the blockade should be over. Nothing else was on all that broad expanse of beautiful harbor, except a little schooner, moored at a buoy, and an abandoned, unseaworthy bark.

For several weeks after the blockade had been established, the members thronged the club-house and waited their turn to gaze through the powerful lenses at the ships flying the lone star flag ; but long before July, 1880, came around, the enemy's fleet had ceased to attract attention ; and as nothing stirred

in the bay, the men shunned the balcony because the view it commanded was disheartening. It told of a dead commerce, of stagnant trade. But this morning all those who possessed the little blue membership tickets hastened to the quarters, and many brought friends, so that within an hour after the arrival of Captain Saunders, Mr. Dartmoor, and the boys, the place was overcrowded, and late comers were compelled to go higher and seek vantage points in windows of the railway company's offices.

The Chucuito party was fortunate, both in arriving early and in being joined by a number of intimate friends, for they were enabled to take possession of one of the large telescopes, and hold it for the morning.

Don Isaac was the first to come, and he listened attentively to the recital by the boys, who told again, for his benefit, of the strange doings at the break of day on the Chucuito beach. They had hardly finished when Señor Cisneros appeared.

"What is this I hear? Are they going to use a torpedo in broad daylight? I fear it will prove certain death for the crew that attempts to approach those ships," and he pointed seaward.

Captain Saunders explained that the torpedo was not of the kind generally launched from war vessels, or sent from shore, and he briefly described the construction of John Longmore's engine of death. The

Peruvian's face flushed while he listened to the recital, and his eyebrows contracted.

"This should not be allowed!" he exclaimed. "It is a crime! Pierola should be appealed to and asked to stop this slaughter."

At these words Mr. Dartmoor looked at Captain Saunders triumphantly. He had been correct in his estimate of the people. First, the officer who had been ordered to oversee the details of launching the lighter had denounced the work to which he had been assigned; and now a representative citizen from the interior deplored the event in even more energetic terms.

It was too late to stop the enactment of the tragedy, too late to appeal to Pierola. The fiendish plot, hatched in the crazed brain of the old whaler, and approved by a hot-headed official in Lima, must go forward. The boat which was laden with market produce had drifted two miles from shore, and was nearing the line where the green water of the harbor merged into the blue beyond; as it passed from one colored surface to the other events began to move rapidly — and all the while, from along the shore, came the buzz of the many thousands who had crowded as near as was possible to the water's edge.

"Look!" suddenly exclaimed Louis. "A boat is putting off from the mole!"

"It's the state barge," said Harvey, after a glance

through the marine glasses. "I wonder what's up now."

The question was soon answered by the craft itself, which was rowed alongside the *Union*. Believing it had been sent out only to carry an officer back to his ship, they paid no more attention to this section of the harbor until Carl called attention again to the corvette, by saying that a steam launch had put off from her side. Puffs of smoke came from the short stack on this small vessel, and after swinging under the stern of the *Union* she shaped a course out toward the open.

The foreigners on the club veranda looked at one another in amazement ; the natives on the beach set up a shout.

"Thank God !" fervently exclaimed Señor Cisneros. "They are going to tow that lighter back to the shore."

Out steamed the launch, at full speed, sending spray flying at the sides of her stem, and leaving astern a narrow path of white that marked where her propeller had churned the water.

Until this small craft appeared in the bay, the Chileans had evidently given no heed to the lighter that, by this time, had well entered the blue ; if it had been sighted by them, no sign to that effect had been made ; they continued to steam slowly backward and forward, patrolling the entrance. But when the

launch had covered half the distance between the shore and the provision-laden barge, the cruiser *Mathias Cousino*, which at that time happened to be the nearest to La Punta, changed her course and made toward the harbor. Ten minutes later she fired a bow gun, and the shot plunged into the water not far from the launch.

The Peruvian boat at once put about and made for the *Union*. A dense cloud of smoke from her stack told that the stoker on board was using all his energy, and that the boiler had been called upon for the highest pressure it could stand.

An expression of disappointment could be seen on the faces of Mr. Dartmoor and Señor Cisneros. The crowd shouted again, and the noise made by the many thousands was like the roar of a train, or the rasping of stones over stones on a beach when the undertow sucks them back. One could not tell whether this shout was in approval or disappointment.

"I do not believe it was ever the intention to have that launch tow the lighter back to port," said Captain Saunders.

"You do not?"

"No."

"Why did she go out, then?"

"It was a ruse."

"But what could have been the object?"

"That ship's manœuvre answers your question," and

the captain pointed to the *Mathias Cousino*, which was moving slowly toward the provision-laden craft. "The Chileans had not noticed Old John's floating mine, or having noticed it were suspicious," he added. "The launch was sent to attract their attention, or to lull their fears by an apparent anxiety to tow the lighter inshore."

Whether Captain Saunders had surmised correctly or not was never known in Callao ; the instructions given the officer in command of the launch were not made public.

Every eye had been turned in the direction of the Chilean cruiser that had left her station, and as she came within a mile of the barge, men on the club balcony climbed on the railings and on tables, that they might see the better, expecting that she would prove a victim to the floating mine. But after a few minutes the *Mathias Cousino* altered her course, and describing a broad semicircle, returned to her position in the squadron.

"She has set signals !" said Captain Saunders, who had been looking through the telescope.

"And the *Blanco* is answering !" remarked Señor Cisneros, after sweeping his marine glasses to the right, where the flagship formed one of the wings of the fleet.

"She's shaping a course for the lighter !" exclaimed the captain, who had swung his telescope around ; and

then every one looked toward the north, from which point of the compass the big ironclad was lumbering shoreward.

A breeze from the south, blowing somewhat earlier in the day than was usual, had cleared the last shadow of mist away, a cool temperature had prevented the forming of a heat haze, and the eye could discern even trees on San Lorenzo Island.

At the time of exchanging signals the *Blanco* was about six miles distant from the *Mathias Cousino*. She moved sluggishly, not over eight knots an hour, for her hull had become foul with the marine growth of the South Pacific ; and it was a half hour from the time she left the line before she reached the spot where the cruiser had been. The lighter had moved some two and a half miles from shore, and was still drifting. To reach this craft the big man-of-war had approached so near that even those who had no marine glasses could make out features of her superstructure ; while persons sitting at the telescopes counted the number of men stationed on the bridge and on other elevated deck works.

By approaching this close the flagship came within easy range of the shore guns, and when she was only a few cables' length distant from the lighter, a shell was sent screeching over the water from one of the rifled pieces in the castle. It struck to the south of her, fully a quarter of a mile.

"That bluff is so poor that I should think her commander would see through it," said Captain Saunders.

"What do you mean by a bluff, father?" asked Carl.

"Why, that gun-fire, evidently ordered to lull the suspicions of the Chileans, who might wonder if no shots were let fly."

"Didn't they aim at her, then?"

"Certainly not, son."

At that moment a shell flew from the Chucuito fort, and it went as wild as had that from the castle.

Then everybody bent forward breathlessly, looked out over the bay with staring eyes, and not a word was spoken; a silence as of death had fallen upon the multitude that thronged the shore lines. For the *Blanco Encalada* had slowly passed between the lighter and the land, had reversed her propeller, and had come to a stop with the lighter alongside. None could see this boat that was crowded with food-stuffs and undermined with sufficient explosives to destroy every ship out there in the offing, but they knew that it had been made fast, and that greedy eyes of half-famished sailors were spying the wealth of edibles — enough food to put new life into every man in the fleet, even as there was sufficient material, hidden by the green, to insure every man a horrible death.

Minutes passed like hours ; the ticking of watches could be heard. What could they be about on the ironclad ? Why the delay ? Why did the crash not come and be over with ?

Harvey was watching as were the others, but all at once he buried his face in his hands and covered his eyes. The boy who had stood before the Majeronas so bravely became dizzy when he thought of the awful scene that might spring into being any moment out in the bay ; a lump was in his throat. Carl and Louis also turned away at times. Strong men were affected and nervously twitched their fingers, tapped the floor with their feet, or bit the ends of their mustaches.

“She’s away ! She’s safe !” suddenly exclaimed the captain. “She’s made out the trap and is putting out to sea again !”

Then everybody saw the lighter reappear under the war-ship’s counter, and gradually the water and sky line broadened between the big ship and the boat.

CHAPTER XVIII.

JOHN LONGMORE'S REVENGE (*concluded*).

SEÑOR CISNEROS gave vent to a sigh of relief ; so did Mr. Dartmoor. The boys were both disappointed and pleased. If they could have seen a war-ship destroyed without loss of life, the spectacle would have thrilled them ; or could they have been eyewitness to a naval engagement in which both sides had warning, they would have enjoyed nothing better. They understood perfectly the attitude taken by their seniors, and their love of fair play told them that such methods of warfare as that employed by John Longmore could have no honest approval.

Captain Saunders picked up his hat from a table, and, rising from the chair where he had ensconced himself so as to look the better through the telescope, he prepared to leave the veranda, and waited a minute until the others could make ready. Several club members had hurriedly taken their departure,

anxious to avoid the crowd that would throng the streets.

"Come, boys," Mr. Dartmoor said, and he started toward the stairs.

"Just a minute, please, father?" asked Louis, who had taken a seat at the telescope. Then he added, "I wonder what the *Blanco* is signalling for?"

"She is signalling, that's a fact," said Carl, who had taken up a pair of marine glasses and was looking seaward.

"Hurry! Don't you see you are keeping us all waiting?" insisted Mr. Dartmoor.

"One second, please, one second! Oh, father, look! There's another ship coming up. See, that one to the south is leaving the line!"

Mr. Dartmoor turned and took the marine glasses which Carl handed to him.

"Take a look, captain," he said, after a minute. "I do believe another ship is planning to take the cargo on board."

Captain Saunders put his eye to the telescope and was heard to mutter:—

"You're right, Dartmoor."

He gazed at the oncoming vessel some few minutes longer, then added: "Yes, sir; one of the transports is making in this direction. And I think that I can understand the reason."

"Are we still in doubt as to the outcome?" asked

Don Isaac, who with Señor Cisneros had returned to the corner.

"Yes. And if I am correct in my surmise, the plot will now succeed."

"How so? Don't you think that the *Blanco's* officers guessed the nature of that cargo?"

"No. I don't believe they did. If they had, she would probably have stood off a short distance and put a shell into it, to test the correctness of the suspicion. Instead of that, the admiral has signalled another ship to approach. My strongest grounds for believing that the ruse has succeeded are based on the nature of the vessel that has been called from the line."

"In what respect?"

"She's a transport. Moreover, she was formerly in the coast service."

"Yes?"

"If I am not mistaken, she is the *Loa*, formerly one of the Chilean Transportation Company's vessels. You will remember her. She was on the Callao-Valparaiso run a year or so ago."

"I remember her well," said Mr. Dartmoor. "I once took passage on her to Arica. Why has she been called?"

"Because she has machinery on board that can be used for lifting the provisions from the lighter. There is a heavy swell outside, and the *Blanco* could

not bring the small boat close enough to transfer the green stuff ; so the former coaster has been ordered to do it. She is especially equipped, with steam winches and swinging cranes, which have been used for that purpose for many years, up and down the coast. Watch, and you will see that I am correct," and he settled himself firmly in the chair, convinced that the tragedy had been postponed, not avoided.

Other club members had noticed the manœuvre out in the open, and had returned to their seats and positions near the railing ; and still others, who were descending the stairs, had been called back by their friends. A movement had been noticed in the crowd on the beach, a wave of humanity had receded toward the city when the *Blanco* put out to sea again ; now the wave was sweeping back, for keen eyes all along the water-front had noticed that change in position by ships of the enemy.

The *Loa*, one of the largest passenger steamers on the Pacific in that day, had been bought by the Chilean government for the purpose of carrying troops from Valparaiso to the Peruvian seaports. Pending the embarkation of the large force that was ultimately to march on Lima, she had been sent to the blockading fleet with supplies. The vessel was almost new, her engines were of a late pattern, and she could steam a good fourteen knots. Therefore

her progress from the line was much more swift than had been that of the *Blanco Encalada*. On she came, parting the glassy rollers, throwing a curved wave to port and another to starboard, smoke belching from the stack, and steam flying in gray tangles from the escape pipe.

“What a shame!” remarked Señor Cisneros, as they watched her approach. “I have heard that the poor fellows out there have been attacked with scurvy. Think what a treat those vegetables would be to them after these long months of salt pork and dry bread!”

“We can only hope that they will discover the plot,” said Mr. Dartmoor.

For ten minutes little was said by those on the veranda; then Captain Saunders, who remained with his eye glued to the object glass, exclaimed:—

“She’s shifted her helm and will bring the lighter on the shore side of her.”

They noticed that she had altered her course; then she slowed down perceptibly.

Five minutes later the *Loa* appeared to be motionless; if she was moving, it was very slowly; the lighter had been brought abeam. Observers who had no glasses could tell the relative position of the two craft, so clear was the air; those with marine glasses could see that preparations were going forward to make the provision boat fast; through the

powerful telescopes every movement of persons on the deck and bridge could be watched.

Captain Saunders commenced to describe rapidly what was happening, for the benefit of those who had no lenses to aid their vision.

"The lighter is abreast the *Loa*," he said. "They have let a rope down over the side, and a sailor is descending to the boat. There! he has found a footing and is making the rope fast to the bow. Another rope has been thrown him, which he is making fast to the stern. Down this comes another fellow, to help him, and another. Three of them are now on board. Fenders are being thrown them to place between the sides, for she is bumping heavily. Ah! nearly over!"

"What was nearly over?" Mr. Dartmoor asked. "The lighter?"

"Yes. She was almost swamped. I wish she had been. Perhaps that wrench has dislodged the machinery of the mine. Now they are passing down poles and these are being used between the sides, instead of fenders, so as to keep her farther off. More men are going on board; there are fully a score of them among the green stuff. I can make out a number of them eating fruit. Poor fellows, what a treat all that does seem! Little do they know that they are enjoying chirimoyas, paltas, and oranges while standing on the brink of death! Now

we shall be able to tell. The suspense won't last much longer!"

"What has happened?" asked Don Isaac.

"They have swung the crane around and are lowering the chain with a basket attached."

"That means they are loading with the green stuff first, I believe. You said that was on top, did you not, Carl?" asked the editor.

"Yes, sir," the boy replied, in a choking voice. "The fruits, the lettuce, beans, and such things are scattered about over the meat and larger vegetables. And flowers too."

"Flowers?"

"An armful of them, sir," Harvey said.

"Then that accounts for the bunch of red which I saw one of the men throw on board just now," said Captain Saunders. "There goes the first basketful. It is going up rapidly; the crane is swinging inboard; it is being dumped on deck. Now the crane is travelling back and the basket is lowered again. The men fall to. They are loading with a will, for an officer has gone down among them and is directing. I suppose the poor devils stopped too often to taste the fruit. The second basketful is going up! up! up! That also is dumped. What's this? The basket is not coming back! No, hooks are being lowered on the end of the chain. They must have put in all the vegetables that were on top

and have reached the meat. Ah, they are commencing at the bow and not amidships. There goes a shoulder of beef! Inboard with it! Out comes the crane arm again and down go the hooks! Another shoulder of beef! Those fellows are working like mad. Why, Dartmoor, they must be nearly famished. I suppose they didn't appreciate what a rich haul they had come across. Merciful God, if Thou wilt but stay Thine hand!"

The brief, fervent prayer was echoed by all who heard. The faces of men and boys had become ashen pale. Two hundred men were on the transport *Loa*, two hundred hungry men, and there were thousands of others in the fleet. The launch contained enough fresh provisions to give them all a treat for at least one day.

The *Blanco Encalada* had steamed only a short distance away, and then had swung around and lay rolling in the trough, waiting, her crew evidently watching the work that was being pushed forward. Other ships of the fleet, realizing from the signals what was happening, had edged closer in.

"They are working their way aft," continued Captain Saunders. "Some smaller pieces are being sent up the side. You say the infernal machine is located exactly amidships?"

"Yes, sir," answered Harvey, in a whisper.

"There, there!" The captain held his hand out,

as if in a warning. "The officer is bending over ; a sailor bends over with him. The hook is being made ——"

The sentence was never finished.

A blinding flash sprang from the side of the transport, a flash that dazzled the eye even in the bright day, and for one infinitesimal measurement of time everything stood out plainly — the side of the ship, the lighter, the men bending over, the men grouped among the provisions, and those who had manned the chains. Then, in contrast with the lightning-like movement of the great glare was the slow movement of the steamship, parting in twain. She opened as though a giant wedge had cleft her in two ; she had been rent asunder by a force that was titanic. And as she thus divided, a roar the like of which no man in Callao had ever heard came thundering over the water. The great sound waves threw themselves upon buildings, causing them to tremble to their foundations, and thrust upon sensitive ear-drums with deafening force. Then they swept on, over the seacoast city, over the pampas country, up to Lima, rattling windows there, and passed from the City of the Kings to the spurs of the Andes, which threw them back in a prolonged echo, so that all the valley seemed filled with sound.

While the roar was spreading, a column of water had sprung into being out in the bay, and spurting

through it was a writhing mass of steam. This vaporous geyser bore in its embrace fragments of men and fragments of iron, steel, and wood; it carried dismembered human beings aloft in its gray fantastic flight, and it also bore piston rods, segments of crank shafts, plates, torn and twisted from the hull, hatch coverings, deck railings, and sides of superstructures; it enveloped a medley of wrought metals and rough wood, and a medley of quivering bodies. It bore upward also the ragged ends of the transport *Loa*, lifting the segments that had been torn asunder, so that the bow of the ship dipped down, and the stern did likewise. Then these two parts plunged beneath the surface, going in opposite directions, and as they went, the spout of water fell, and the steam settled down over all. This steam could be seen whirling and eddying, and when the light wind threw it to one side, the water was seen to be whirling and eddying even as had done the vapor, throwing up pieces of wood in places, and also black objects, which those who still looked — and they were not many, for the great majority had turned their heads because of the horror — knew to be the bodies of men.

From the sides of the *Blanco Encalada* boats commenced to creep; from farther out in the bay other vessels of the fleet cast great columns of smoke into the air as they made haste to the rescue.

The many persons on the veranda of the English Club said nothing for fully five minutes, so struck with awe were they. Then Captain Saunders found voice to call the boys.

"We had better go now," he said. "You have witnessed what will go down into history as the crime of the Chile-Peruvian War."

His prophecy was true. That which Mr. Dartmoor and Señor Cisneros had said also came to pass, for Peru as a nation mourned what had been done, and the blush of shame came to the cheeks of many whenever the sinking of the *Loa* was mentioned.

Months later those in Callao who had watched this spectacle learned that one hundred Chileans had been killed and fifty wounded by Old John's infernal machine.

"We had better go to Lima," added the captain, when they had left the veranda and had mingled with the thousands who were slowly leaving the beach.

"Why? Do you think there will be a bombardment?"

"Assuredly there will be. The Chileans will be avenged to-night."

They went to the capital, and so did thousands of other residents of the seacoast city.

At sunset the Chilean fleet steamed in close under the guns, and paying no heed to the fire from the

forts, poured shot and shell into Callao until morning came. Houses were destroyed, large buildings were lacked through and through, and many fires were started. There was a death list among those who remained in the town, and many persons were wounded.

CHAPTER XIX.

A STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE.

NEWS filtered through the lines from the south of serious reverses to Peruvian arms. It came overland, for there was no communication by sea. The word was to the effect that Arica had been taken by assault on June 7, and that there had been great loss of life in the Peruvian army.

No man doubted that the Peruvian city had fallen, but as for the particulars, so many rumors were afloat that no credence was given any of them, and every one anxiously awaited definite information.

Much lawlessness prevailed about this time, both in the cities and in the surrounding country. Nearly half the population was under arms in Lima and Callao, and these many thousand soldiers, inactive save for the daily drills, became restless, and when given liberty they resorted to deeds of violence. Day after day reports reached the towns of country haciendas having been pillaged, and the occupants forced to pay tribute to marauding bands; citizens,

out late at night, were frequently robbed; and a prominent English physician of Callao was attacked while walking on the plank road leading from Chucuito, and was killed.

The army as a whole deplored this reign of terror, and officers did their best to check the wave of crime. Courts-martial were frequent; the guilty were ranged against a wall and shot, but, despite this energetic action, deeds of violence continued. Some of the worst characters in Peru had volunteered for the ranks, and as they were known as desperate fighters, their services had been accepted. All would have been well could they have been led at once against the enemy, but retained in camp, and months passing without action, their worst natures came to the surface.

When the reign of terror had become recognized as beyond the power of the authorities entirely to subdue, Mr. Dartmoor regretted more than ever that he had not sent his family to the United States; indeed, he regretted that he had not left the country with them before the enemy's ships had closed the port.

Captain Saunders, convinced that no vessels could enter the harbor for many more months, and realizing that in their absence his presence in Peru was of no benefit to the American Board of Marine Underwriters, decided upon an overland journey, with Carl,

to one of the northern cities, from where they could take passage for Panama. He spoke of the plan to Mr. Dartmoor, and the iron merchant decided to accompany him. Mr. Lawton, hearing of their proposed trip, and having arranged his affairs in a satisfactory manner, said that he also would go.

"But your newspaper?" asked Captain Saunders.

"I shall suspend publication. All my obligations have been met, thanks to Harvey and his father, and I am in a position where I can close the plant and reopen it when peace shall be declared and business resume."

"I think it would be wise for us all to go," declared Mr. Dartmoor. "Nothing can be done with the mine until this unfortunate war shall come to an end, and we are constantly exposing our lives here. What will you do?" he asked, turning to Señor Cisneros, who had remained in Callao, hoping that the clouds of depression might lift.

"I shall return to Huari and wait for peace," he replied. "We are safe in the mountains. I wish you all could go with me."

They thanked him, but declined. Mr. Dartmoor had not been home save for a brief period since the Civil War; he wished his children to become better acquainted with the great republic to the north, and he was anxious that Mrs. Dartmoor should see more of the United States.

Plans were formed to travel overland to Payta, and some forty or fifty other Americans and English decided to accompany them. The day for departure had been set when two events occurred, the first of which put a temporary stop to preparations, and the second altered their arrangements materially.

One evening, during the last week in July, five young persons were gathered in the parlor of Mr. Dartmoor's Chucuito residence — Carl Saunders, Louis and Harvey Dartmoor and their sister Rosita, and Bella Caceras. The presence of the girls in the Callao suburb was due to a temporary truce that had been agreed to by the commander-in-chief of the land forces and the admiral of the Chilean fleet, whereby it was agreed not to exchange shots for a fortnight.

This had no effect upon the blockade, but it made Callao a safe place to live in so far as the element of bombardment was eliminated, and, taking advantage of the lull in hostilities, those who had homes near the sea removed from Lima, so as to enjoy the bracing salt-laden air and have a brief respite from the crowded, soldier-burdened life of the capital.

The evening had been prefaced by one of those dinners for which John Dartmoor's home had been noted before his financial difficulties had embarrassed him. To be sure, this day the dishes were not as

numerous as they had been before the blockade, and that which was served cost four and five times the price of edibles in the olden times, but steaming pucharo was there, as of yore, and there was no lack of paltas and other fruit.

After the enjoyable hour at table, Mr. Dartmoor, Captain Saunders, and Señor Cisneros went to the billiard room, and Mrs. Dartmoor accompanied the young people to the parlor, from where, after a few minutes' conversation, she went to her bedroom, having some sewing to do—for these days of preparations were busy ones, and, as all women know, it was upon the mother that the greatest burdens fell.

Toward eight o'clock, Harvey, who had stepped out on the balcony for a minute, suggested that they stroll over to Mar Bravo beach.

"It's a perfect night," he said. "The moon is full and there's hardly a cloud to be seen; only a few of fleecy white that scud along as if ashamed to interrupt the light."

"Do you realize, sir, that if you should change that sentence a trifle you would have a verse for a poem?" laughingly said Bella Caceras. "But you are right. It is lovely. Let's all go. The evening is warm and we do not need any wraps, do we, Rosita?"

"I think not," and rising, Miss Dartmoor joined

her friend, then all passed out the door and down the stairs.

"Where are you going?" called Mr. Dartmoor, from the billiard room.

"To the beach, father," answered Louis.

"Don't be gone long."

"No, sir ; not over a half hour."

It was the first time the five had visited Mar Bravo beach since the happy days preceding the blockade, when these evenings at Chucuito were of frequent occurrence.

"This does seem good !" exclaimed Harvey, as he sat down on a circular, flat-topped stone, as near the line where spray dashed as he could venture without being wet.

"What did you say ?" called Bella Caceras, who was seated somewhat above him.

"I said that this seems good," he called back. For, although they were almost within touch, the roar of the breakers and their accompanied undertow was so loud as to drown conversation.

"Better than fighting Majeronas with pincushions ?" he heard her mischievously ask.

At this he followed a receding breaker, and snatching a clump of seaweed from the swirl, he returned and threatened to crown the Peruvian with the dripping mass unless she offered an apology.

"I'll be good ! I'll be good !" she shouted, endeavor-

oring to rise. "Oh, look at the beautiful starfish you have in the bunch!"

Harvey deposited the seaweed at her feet, and Rosita came over with Carl and Louis, to examine closely the red stellerid that had been so unexpectedly captured. The time passed only too quickly, and all were surprised when Louis, looking at his watch, and recalling the remark he had made to his father, said they must hasten home, for they had been absent from the house nearly an hour.

On the return, when halfway between the beach and the Dartmoor Row, as the house owned by the boys' father and those adjacent to it were called, Carl proposed a race.

"I can't run," protested Bella Caceras.

"Oh, try," urged Louis.

"Let me whisper in your ear," said Rosita, and then exclaiming, "Pardon me, boys," she said to her friend, very low, "Let's start with them, then you and I stop suddenly, and walk on. We will have a nice talk all alone and they'll never notice it."

"Very well."

"Will you race?" asked Carl.

"Yes, we'll race."

"Then all in line," said Louis. "One, two, three, and off!"

Great rivalry had always existed between the boys, and once started they strained every muscle to call

forth speed. Before his trip into the interior Harvey had never been able to keep up with his brother and chum; but that journey had toughened him greatly, made him more agile, and this evening he surprised the other two by taking the lead and keeping it. So intent were all three, that they never looked around until the house was reached, nor even then, for Harvey dashed in at the front door, the others after him, and all sat down on the steps, panting and out of breath.

"Well, that's the jolliest sprint we've had for a long time," said Louis, when he had recovered sufficiently to form the words.

"I believe it is the first time we have tried to see who could beat since we used to run from Chucuito to La Punta in the old days of the Rowing Club," replied Carl. "And say, Louis, what do you think of your young brother here? Beating us square and fair by three feet or more in a three hundred yard dash!"

"Sh!" exclaimed the boy whom they were complimenting. "Listen! What's the row in the yard? And, Louis, mother is screaming, calling out, or something. Come on! Come on, Carl!"

They needed no urging, but dashed up the stairs, two and three steps at a time, then through the house to the rear balcony, which overlooked a large court. There they met Mrs. Dartmoor, who was crying hysterically.

"What's the matter, mother?" asked Louis and Harvey, at the same instant.

"I don't know," she sobbed. "There was a noise in the stables and your father went down. I heard some terrible sounds, and then he called for Carl's father and Señor Cisneros. They were already on the way to him, and the three must have had an encounter with some one. It seemed as if all the horses had been turned loose. Oh, I don't know what has happened!"

At that moment a voice came from below, calling:—

"Have the boys returned?"

"Yes, father," replied Louis. "We are here."

"Come down."

"All right, sir," he replied, and the lads obeyed only too willingly. Mrs. Dartmoor, reassured at hearing her husband's voice, returned to her room.

The Dartmoor Row, which included the house occupied by John Dartmoor before his failure, and to which he had removed since the discovery of the gold mine, and the advance to him of money by capitalists of Lima, consisted of a number of fine residences, built in a semicircle in the heart of Chucuito suburb. They were, in fact, the most pretentious structures in this little place, and because of the prominence in diplomatic and business life of the tenants, they were known by foreigners all up and down the

West Coast. Back of the houses was a high fence, which completed the circle, and which enclosed a large court. Within the enclosure were the stables and other outbuildings, arranged so that the whole somewhat resembled an English country residence ; indeed, it was said to have been patterned from an estate near London. Flights of stairs connected the court with the different houses, and it was down one of these that the boys ran. At the bottom they met Mr. Dartmoor, Señor Cisneros, and Captain Saunders.

"We had a little brush with them," said Louis's father.

"With whom, sir?" the lads asked, and they saw that the iron merchant was holding a handkerchief to the side of his head and that the Peruvian was limping as if his leg pained him.

"With a rascally band of soldiers," replied Mr. Dartmoor. "But they were not half so bad as their leader. Louis, who do you think he was?"

"But, father, are you hurt?"

"Nothing to speak of. Tell me, who do you think led the soldiers into the court?"

"Alfred?"

"Yes, Alfred."

"The scoundrel!"

Mr. Dartmoor spoke of a young Englishman to whom they had given employment about the place. He had deserted from an English man-of-war, and,

believing his story to be true, that harsh treatment had caused him to run away from the ship, the iron merchant had found work for him. But he soon learned that the young man was addicted to the use of strong liquors, and after repeated warnings he was compelled to discharge him. The notification that he was no longer needed had brought bitter words from the former sailor boy, who had denounced Mr. Dartmoor and had threatened to "get even."

"What did he try to do, father?" asked Harvey.

"Try to do! He has done it. He and his band have taken all the horses!"

"The horses?"

"Yes, every one that was in the stables. Yours and Louis's, mine, and two that belonged to Mr. Dartnell. I heard the noise and ran down the stairs. There were fully twenty of them, and I could do nothing, so called Captain Saunders and the señor, but they got away."

While this conversation was taking place they had walked from the centre of the court to the stairs, which they soon commenced to mount. At the top they were met by Mrs. Dartmoor, who asked:—

"Did Rosita go into the court with you, boys?"

"Rosita? No," said Harvey. "Is she not in the house with Bella Caceras?"

"No. I have called her several times."

"Why, that is strange. They came back with us

from Mar Bravo. That is, they followed close behind."

The boy ran into the house and called "Rosita! Rosita! Rosita!"

No answer came.

Louis and Carl hurried after him. "They are hiding downstairs," said the latter. "They are playing a joke on us because we ran away from them."

"They shouldn't do that," said Harvey. "They must have heard mother call. A joke is a joke, but they ought not to worry her."

The boys ran down the steps and out in front. The girls were not in sight. They looked in the doorways of the neighboring houses. No one could be seen.

"Rosita! Rosita!" called Harvey and Louis. "Don't try to hide any longer. We know where you are."

There was no answer.

"Where do you suppose they are?" asked Harvey, and his voice trembled.

"I think we should tell father," said Louis, and running to the foot of the stairs he called to Mr. Dartmoor.

"What is it, Louis?" asked the iron merchant.

"We can't find Rosita and Bella Caceras."

"Can't find Rosita! Why, what do you mean? Rosita!" he called.

No reply came.

"Where were they, boys, when you saw them last?"

"Following us from Mar Bravo. We all started on a foot race, and the girls were with us. They couldn't have been more than a dozen steps in the rear."

"Perhaps they are hiding behind the stones. Run over to the beach and see if they are not."

The boys did as they were bid and returned in five minutes. No sign of the girls had been seen. All called again. There was no answer. Mrs. Dartmoor came downstairs and added her cries to those of the men and the boys. Not a voice was heard in reply.

Rosita Dartmoor and Bella Caceras had disappeared.

CHAPTER XX.

A CHASE INTO THE PAMPAS COUNTRY.

THEY formed a startled group out in front of the Dartmoor Row, standing in the white of the moonlight, and for fully a minute not a sound came from them, except low moans from Mrs. Dartmoor's lips. These, too, suddenly ceased, and the woman fell toward her husband.

"Quick, Louis! Help me! Your mother has fainted!"

The boy sprang to his father's side.

"We must carry her upstairs."

Captain Saunders also hurried to assist, and the three bore the deathlike mother to her bedroom, where restoratives were applied, and she soon regained consciousness.

"There, I am better now," she said, as soon as she could sit upright. "I must go down and look for Rosita," and she tried to struggle to her feet.

"No. Please don't try to do that," urged her husband. "Louis will go, and so will the captain,

and with Señor Cisneros, Carl, and Harvey they will do all that is possible. I shall remain by your side until you are much better."

Then he stepped over to Captain Saunders and whispered, "For God's sake do what you can!"

"Rest assured that I will," was the reply, and he left the room with the boys.

Below they saw Señor Cisneros walking slowly up and down the road, near the end of the row. He was bent nearly double, and was carefully examining the ground.

"Come here," he finally called to those who were gathered near the door, and when they had approached, he added, "Do you see these hoof prints, rounding from the stables?"

"Yes," they all exclaimed.

"Notice that they continue on in front of the houses about a hundred feet and then stop."

He had walked along while calling their attention to the marks that were plain in the light-colored, sandy soil of the roadway.

"You are correct," said Captain Saunders. "What does it mean?"

"First, let's ascertain if they continue up the main road," and turning, he walked in the direction of Callao again.

"Yes," he added, "they doubled over this stretch. Notice how confused the imprints are, and now,"

when they had passed the corner, "see, they are plain again on the way to the city! Those girls, Rosita and Bella, have been kidnapped."

"Kidnapped? By whom?"

"By that scoundrelly Englishman and his ruffianly band. After leaving the stables they made for the main road. At the corner they saw the girls, and as they were only a few feet away, they picked them up and dashed off again. We did not hear them nor the cries of the girls, which of course were soon stifled, because we were so occupied in the court."

"I *did* hear a scream," said Captain Saunders, "but paid no particular attention, thinking one of the women servants had cried in alarm because of the uproar in the stables. But, señor, for what reason would they kidnap the girls?"

"For a ransom. That English renegade knows about the gold mine, and the thought came to him at once to extort money. Here, Harvey, come back!"

The boy, who had started on a run, came to a halt.

"Where are you going?"

"After them," he replied.

"You can do nothing alone and on foot. We'll all start. Louis, are there any horses in the neighborhood?"

He shook his head in negation.

"Oh, yes there are!" exclaimed Harvey, who had quickly returned. "There are some at the fort."

"Then hurry over there as fast as you can, explain to the commandante what has happened, and ask him if he will lend us mounts. Louis, you go with him, and Captain Saunders, let your son go also. It will take three of them to bring back the horses."

"Certainly. Make haste, Carl!"

The lads disappeared around the corner, and their footfalls could be heard as they started to cross the peninsula.

The señor at once went upstairs, and returned with Mr. Dartmoor, who looked over the ground as the others had done, and became convinced that the Peruvian's theory was correct.

"Mrs. Dartmoor is better," he said, returning to the door. "Captain, will you do me a favor?"

"Anything you ask."

"Then remain with my wife, for I must join in this chase."

"I shall do so willingly, if she needs any one."

"Yes, she does; for her nerves are completely shattered, and I dare not trust her alone."

"Very well, I will remain. Would you like to have Carl accompany you?"

"By all means. We need as large a force as can be quickly mustered."

They were upstairs again before this conversation

was ended, and Mr. Dartmoor, hastening to his wife, reassured her the best he could.

"I do not apprehend any harm will befall the girls, aside from a rough ride," he said. "Those marauders want money, that's all."

"You will pay them?"

"Yes, of course I will, should it be necessary; but I don't think it will be."

"Hurry, then; oh, do hurry!"

"We will be off as soon as the horses come. It will be all right then for me to go and leave Captain Saunders with you, dear?"

"Yes, yes. I really do not need any one — but if the captain could stay, I should like to have him."

"I am very glad that I can be of any service," said Carl's father. "And let me assure you, Mrs. Dartmoor, that I feel convinced your daughter and Señorita Caceras will soon be recovered."

Meanwhile the men who were to go were making hurried preparations, casting aside coats and vests, and donning flowing ponchos; also exchanging shoes for high boots. Mr. Dartmoor went into the boys' room and gathered an armful of articles, which he thought his sons would need, and which he carried downstairs so they might lose no time in getting ready for the road.

"We'll leave what we don't want on the sidewalk,"

he called to Captain Saunders. "Please have one of the servants take them in."

The clatter of hoofs sounded, and four horsemen dashed around the corner and came to a sharp halt in a cloud of dust. Four other horses were being led. The first to dismount was a little man clad in a brilliant uniform of red and gold braid.

"General Matajente!" exclaimed Mr. Dartmoor, and he grasped the soldier fiercely by the hand. "Thank God you have come!"

"Rosita and Bella kidnapped!" replied the officer. "Never fear, we will soon be up with them."

"Hurry, boys! dismount and make ready!" and Mr. Dartmoor pointed to the clothing that lay on the pavement.

So expeditious were the lads that they were fully equipped by the time the men had tightened their saddle girths.

"Have you weapons?" asked the general, as they all prepared to mount.

Mr. Dartmoor made an affirmative gesture.

"And the boys?"

"Each has a revolver. I have permitted them to carry firearms since these dangerous times began."

"Then let's be off!"

They started at a canter up the road to Callao, knowing the wisdom of not urging the horses at the start. As for the course they pursued, the topogra-

phy of the land was such that the marauders could have taken no other. In the city they received information that directed them still farther. A policeman near the English railway station had seen the soldiers going rapidly to the northeast. Yes, he had noticed two señoritas in the party, and he had believed the troops were escorting them. Did they call out? No.

"Then," said General Matajente, "they must have been gagged, or else the scoundrels rode close and threatened them. Tell me," he inquired of the policeman, "were the señoritas mounted — each on a horse by herself?"

"Yes, señor commandante."

"Forward, then!" And the party started across the city in the direction indicated. At the farther end, not far from the Baños del Oroya, they came upon a sentinel on guard near an artillery camp, and from him they also secured information. The kidnappers had passed on beyond Callao, going in the same general direction.

"They have taken the road to Bella Vista, that's certain. Now we can go faster."

Spurs were pressed to flanks, whips were let fall, and the horses dashed forward on a run. The three men were in front and the boys close behind. The animals that had been brought from the Santa Rosa fort were the best in the stables, for General

Matajente, who had been the guest, during the evening, of the commanding officer, and had heard Louis's and Harvey's petition for steeds, had warmly seconded their request and finally had selected the mounts himself. Accustomed to command, the little officer had unconsciously taken the head of the party; and Mr. Dartmoor was rejoiced thereat, for the courage and ability of the general had been tested many times, and was known to equal that of any man in the service of Peru.

It is two miles from Callao to Bella Vista, and within five minutes after leaving the city they drew rein in the little settlement, their horses snorting, with heads uplifted, necks arched, flecks of foam dropping from their mouths, and sweat commencing to show on their shoulders.

"Two roads branch from here," said the general, "and we must decide quickly which to take. Señor Cisneros, perhaps you can aid us again."

The resident of Huari had already dismounted, and he went at once to the fork, then walked rapidly in a stooping posture along the highway to the right. It was still bright moonlight and would be for several hours, so that he had little difficulty in scanning the ground. After going a hundred feet or so, he returned with the information that no one had recently passed that way, except a party of two or three, and they had moved at a walk. Then he moved over

the left branch, going even farther this time, and upon returning he said : —

“Not a person has passed over this road on horse-back in the last twenty-four hours.”

They looked at one another in alarm. Had a mistake been made and all this time wasted ? Who had given the wrong direction, the policeman or the soldier ?

But suddenly the general exclaimed : “There may be a clever rogue in that party. To horse, señor ! I have a plan,” and riding forward, he led them along the road that branched to the left.

“Where can he be going ?” asked Mr. Dartmoor. “He must realize that every moment counts.”

“He believes they made a detour, and so do I,” replied Señor Cisneros.

The general rode at a rapid gait full a quarter of a mile, bending down close to the saddle, his head almost on a level with his horse’s neck, scanning the white roadway ; then, drawing rein suddenly, he exclaimed in a triumphant tone : —

“Try it again, señor, at this point.”

Señor Cisneros was no sooner on his feet than he said : “Yes, here are the tracks ! They came out of the short grass at this point.”

“And they entered it below Bella Vista, believing

they could throw us off the trail !” added General Matajente. “Now I think we have them. The road is straight to the Rimac, then follows along its bank for ten miles, and after that comes a bridle-path up the hills. Forward ! Not too fast, señores ! Easy with the horses for a few minutes, then we’ll let them out !”

They rode close. No words were exchanged ; the only sounds were the hoof-beats and the hoarse breathing of the horses. The speed was increased gradually, General Matajente setting the pace, and soon the gnarled cacti and dwarf shrubs of the pampas country seemed to pass them by as do objects seen from the window of a train. A half hour of this riding brought a mass of vegetation in sight ahead : rows of bamboos, palms, and willows. The soil became more fertile ; thick, heavy grass, dotted here and there with yellow lilies, took the place of the dry vegetation.

They had reached the valley of the Rimac. From the dense underbrush on each side darted birds ; the cries of others sounded. A silver thread shone between an opening in the woods ahead, and in another minute the road turned more to the east, commenced to follow the wanderings of the river, and became no longer level but slightly up grade.

“Halt !” said General Matajente, and when they had drawn rein he added : “A five minutes’ rest

now may be worth a mile of extra speed later. Everybody dismount ! Now let's lead the animals to the bank and let them drink. But only a little. Remember, boys, only a swallow or two. Beat them back if you have to."

They did as he directed, and had no little trouble restraining the heated, panting animals ; then returned to the road again and waited by the horses' sides until the word was given to mount, when they started once more, convinced that they were on the right track, for all had been able to see the imprints of hoofs on the roadway.

"The scoundrels didn't stop to water here," said General Matajente to Mr. Dartmoor, when they were riding again. "They probably tried it farther along and failed, for the banks are too high. I tell you, my friend, we've got them !"

The iron merchant reached out his hand and grasped that which the little officer had extended. No further words were exchanged, for the father was too choked for utterance.

Fragrance from heliotrope bushes came to them, borne on the light wind that swept down from the mountains. The road turned frequently, and at no time could they see far ahead ; it was thrown into shadow in places by dense grasses, and in others stretched away in clear moonlight. On they rode, faster and faster, the horses needing very little

urging, for they sprang forward gladly in the clear, cool night. An hour passed without a word being said by any one, then the silence was broken by the general.

“They should not be far off now. I don’t believe they had over a half hour’s start, and they do not know how to save their horses. Besides, the most of the animals they have cannot compare with these. Of course those which they took from your stables are runners, but all the others must be ordinary cavalry mounts.”

Mr. Dartmoor nodded his head, to signify that he understood, but he did not speak.

Still they rode on, sweeping under willows that touched their heads and shoulders, curving in and out between the bamboo rows, at times near the river, again several rods from the bank, following the winding road that by this time had narrowed so that only two could ride abreast, and was increasing in up grade. They had passed through an unusually long stretch of forest and had emerged into an equally long reach of roadway, lighted by the moon, which was still about two hours high—for it was nearly midnight—when General Matajente yelled :—

“There they are!” and pointed to markings straight ahead that at first looked like tall bushes, indicating another turn, but which a second glance told were moving.

A burst of speed followed his exclamation, for reins had been loosened, rowels dug into the horses feverishly, and whips let fall. The pursued were not a quarter of a mile distant and the pursuers were rapidly nearing them, for the shadows grew in size. Indeed, they grew so rapidly that the general looked with care, and then cried sharply, "Halt!" catching Mr. Dartmoor's horse by the bridle, throwing both the front animals almost on their haunches and bringing those behind to a stand.

"What do you mean?" exclaimed the iron merchant, angrily. He had drawn his revolver.

"You must not fire. Remember the girls are with them."

Mr. Dartmoor replaced the weapon in his pocket. "But why do we stop?" he asked.

"They have stopped. And see, one of the band is coming to meet us. They want to parley. Let me speak with him, will you?"

"Yes, yes, and pardon me, general."

The little officer rode ahead a few paces, and Señor Cisneros moved up to Mr. Dartmoor's side, then all pressed closer.

A man clad in a ragged uniform came riding slowly from the group beyond.

"Well, what is it, fellow?" said the officer.

"General Matajente!" The tone showed the surprise felt by the bandit, but noticing the small

numbers behind the intrepid warrior, he regained courage and said insolently : —

“ Our captain wants money.”

“ Who, pray, is your captain ? ”

“ Captain Alfred. He sends word that the señoritas must be paid for.”

“ If I did right, I would shoot you down, you dog.”

“ Then they would kill the señoritas.”

“ And what would happen to the murderers ? ”

The bandit shrugged his shoulders. “ We are forty and you are six,” he said.

“ So many as that ! ” General Matajente was heard to murmur ; then aloud he said, “ What do you propose ? ”

“ The captain wants twenty thousand pesos (dollars), señor commandante, and he will release the señoritas unharmed.”

“ And if he is refused ? ”

The bandit drew his hand across his throat significantly.

“ Stop ! ” implored Señor Cisneros, seizing Mr. Dartmoor’s bridle rein.

“ Twenty thousand dollars ! You don’t suppose we’ve anywhere near that sum at our command ! ”

“ Our captain says that you can get it, señor commandante. He knows of the gold mine.”

“ But even if we could get the money, it would take a long time. Will you return the señoritas to us if we promise to pay ? ”

"I will ask the captain," was the answer, and the man rode back. He soon returned. "No, señor commandante. The captain will keep the señoritas, and they will be taken to our camp near Chosica. He promises they will be unharmed if you will do what he says."

"What is that?"

"Return to Callao, secure the money, then two of you, not more, come to Chosica twenty-four hours from now. We shall be able to see you approaching a mile away. If more than two come, it will be useless, for no one will appear; but if you do as the captain says, the señoritas will be delivered to you."

"That can never be!" exclaimed Mr. Dartmoor. "Twenty-four hours in those rascals' hands! The girls had better be dead. Let's advance, general."

"Please don't interfere," urged the officer. Then to the bandit he said, "What do you suppose will happen to you later?"

"*Quien sabe?*" (who knows) and he shrugged his shoulders again. "We shall have the money."

Harvey pushed forward his horse just then to the side of General Matajente, and began to whisper earnestly in his ear. After a few minutes the officer said:—

"This young man wishes to return with you and reassure his sister and her companion. Will you take him?"

“What answer shall I give the captain?”

“That depends upon whether the señoritas are unharmed and whether you do what we ask. When the boy returns you come with him and we will give the reply.”

“Very well, señor commandante. I can see no harm in that,” and wheeling his horse he went back over the road, with the boy following.

As soon as they were out of earshot General Matajente said earnestly :—

“When they return, hold your horses ready for a sudden dash. Draw your revolvers, but keep them concealed.”

“What do you propose?” asked Señor Cisneros.

“I do not understand clearly myself, as yet. Harvey has formed some plan, and will tell more when he has seen his sister and Señorita Caceras!”

The lad had indeed thought of a way to outwit the bandits. It came to him suddenly, and was not fully matured even when he started from General Matajente’s side, but as he rode on he saw more clearly, and his heart beat fast and the blood surged to his cheeks. “If they are only mounted on Nigger and Tom,” he thought. “If they only ——”

His guide stopped further reflection by the sharp command, “Wait here, while I ride on,” and Harvey reined in his horse under an ironwood tree, about fifty yards from the group, which could now be seen distinctly ahead.

The envoy evidently conferred with the leader, for after a few minutes another voice called out, "Ride up! quick now!" and the boy urged his horse forward. He was permitted to approach within a few feet, and there he saw his sister and her friend, both mounted on horses and seated astride.

"Thank God!" he thought, "Rosita is on Nigger and Bella is on Tom."

The girls were not bound, nor were they gagged, but forming a semicircle behind and at the sides of them, partly in the road and partly in the long grass, were a dozen mounted bandits, revolvers shining in their hands. The girls were very pale, but did not appear to have been injured in any way. They looked like ghosts there in the moonlight, clad in the white dresses they had donned for the evening at Chucuito. They were strangely silent, and the only greeting given Harvey was with their wild, staring eyes.

The man who had called out rode from the centre, and Harvey saw that he was Alfred, the discharged servant.

"Want to speak with your sister, eh, boy? Well, you can. They're all right. Yes, you may answer," he added, turning to the girls. "You see, we told them we'd blow their brains out if they said anything."

"Oh, Harvey! Save us! Save us! Isn't papa coming?"

"It will be all right, Rosita," the boy answered nervously. "Have you been hurt?"

"No, not much. My side pains me, for I was lifted suddenly into the saddle."

"How are you, Bella?"

The Peruvian girl, who had not yet spoken, answered hurriedly and somewhat wildly, "It's horrible! horrible!"

Harvey gained control of himself by an effort, and said: "We're going to get you out of this all right. Don't worry any more. I've got to go now. Keep up your courage."

As he turned his horse, the bandit who had been an envoy rode out from the bushes to his side.

"One moment," said the leader, and Harvey drew rein.

"You can tell your father and the others that the girls are in front and we propose to keep them there. If any of you fire, they will be hit first. Now go back, and I think you will advise the old gentleman to pay."

On the return trip Harvey continued saying to himself, "Rosita is on Nigger and Bella on Tom."

"How are they, my son?" called Mr. Dartmoor, as soon as the two were within hailing distance.

"They have not been hurt," replied the boy,

who then rode rapidly to the side of General Matajente.

"The captain wants his answer, señor comandante," exclaimed the bandit.

"Just a minute ; wait till I hear the lad's report."

Meanwhile Harvey had been whispering rapidly :
 "The girls are on our horses, Rosita on Louis's and Bella on mine. They are the swiftest horses in Chucuito. Both are several steps in advance of the men, and no one is touching them. They are good riders. Shall I do it ?"

"Yes, and God help you. Quick now !"

The boy swung his horse round, and rising from his saddle yelled at the top of his voice : —

"*Coo-ee ! Coo-ee !*"

It was a call used by brothers and sister. When out riding, if they became separated and wished to attract one another's attention, this was their signal. It meant to hurry as well.

"*Coo-ee ! Coo-ee !*"

Horses had learned the call, as well as the boys and the girl. The animals always pricked their ears and started toward the sound when it rang out.

"*Coo-ee ! Coo-ee !*"

A sharp ring of hoofs ; a scream from up the road — a scream, the intonation of which showed that the one who gave vent to it understood.

Quick as a flash General Matajente wheeled his horse, dashed up to the solitary bandit, and gave him a blow on the head with the butt of his revolver that caused the man to reel and fall from his saddle.

“Open ranks there !” called the general. “Let the girls through !”

Two black streaks, bearing fluffy burdens of white, were moving swiftly down the moonlit road, followed several yards behind by a dense mass, from which came cries and yells.

“Close in after the girls, Dartmoor and Cisneros !” ordered the little officer. “Carl and Louis go next ! Harvey, stay with me !”

On came Nigger and Tom, gaining with every stride of their magnificent limbs ; on into their midst and through them, down the road, and as they went the two men and two boys followed and covered the retreat.

“Fire !” called General Matajente, who had taken his revolver from a saddle pouch. Two shots rang out, one from his weapon and one discharged by Harvey. A man fell from the front rank of those who pursued, a horse toppled over, and there was confusion in the mass.

“Now ride for it !” called the general, and off the two started, down the road, following the others.

Soon cries came again from the rear, horses at a gallop were heard, and an intermittent firing began.



"Two black streaks, bearing fluffy burdens of white, were moving swiftly down the moonlit road."



But the bandits were riding hard and their aim was poor.

"On with you!" exclaimed General Matajente, digging spurs into his horse. "Ah! What's that?" and he pointed to a dense mass ahead of them, ahead even of the girls and their escorts, a mass that was coming forward swiftly. "Cavalry! The commandante of Santa Rosa fort! He said that he would follow."

It was indeed a squadron, and the ranks opened to let the fugitives pass through, then re-formed with General Matajente at the head. The bandits, not seeing the increased force because of a turn in the road, came on wildly, and were met by a withering volley from carbines. There was a short, sharp struggle, and in five minutes twenty men lay dead or wounded on the ground, and a score more had been made prisoners.

Then all rode back to Callao, Rosita still on Nigger, close by her father's side, while Bella Caceras, on Tom, had Louis and Harvey as escorts.

CHAPTER XXI.

OLD GLORY IN THE BAY.

“The star-spangled banner,
O long may it wave!
O'er the land of the free
And the home of the brave.”

GENERAL MATAJENTE and Señor Cisneros acted as hosts one afternoon, a week after the stirring events related in the last two chapters, and entertained as guests at luncheon those who were about to undertake the overland journey north. The tables were set in the grand *salle* of the big hotel on the tip of La Punta.

The truce agreed upon by the commanders of the land and sea forces would end with the going down of the sun on the morrow, and it was expected that warlike operations would be renewed with vigor. This meant active work for the general, and as his friends would leave for the States within twenty-four hours, he had suggested this means of bidding farewell.

Don Isaac was also there, and so were Señor and Señora Caceras and Bella. The latter would, of course, remain in Peru ; at least everybody thought they would remain, until, immediately after rising from the table, Mr. Dartmoor announced that he had persuaded Señor Caceras to send his wife and daughter to the States with them. There was much rejoicing among the young people at this, for they had been drawn very close by the perils through which they had passed.

"I don't see how it is possible for me to get ready," said the señora.

"Try," urged Mrs. Dartmoor. "I will help you to-night and to-morrow morning."

"I would advise you to make the journey, madam," said Don Isaac. "Your daughter does not seem to have been well since her exciting experience."

"No, she has not, and I suppose the journey, especially the sea voyage, would be of great benefit."

"Indeed it will," assented Mrs. Dartmoor. "Rosita also needs a change. She has become very nervous. For that matter, I think we have all been somewhat upset by these trying times. I wish your husband could accompany us."

"I may be able to do so, at least as far as Panama," he said.

"Then I shall go," said Señora Caceras.

Bella brightened at this, and Harvey, who had

appeared somewhat worried when the conversation had taken a doubtful tone, exclaimed in unromantic, but no less hearty, tones, "Isn't that bully !"

"General Matajente, I wish that you could go," said Mrs. Dartmoor.

"Duty, señora, compels me to remain."

"And you, Señor Cisneros ?"

"I must return to Huari."

From the large salle in which luncheon had been served they went to the broad veranda above, where there were many chairs, and from where they could enjoy the beautiful view of the bay, the seacoast city beyond, and Lima in the distance.

Both Carl and his father felt a twinge of sadness when they saw the suite of rooms where they had passed so many happy months before Mrs. Saunders had returned to the States with Harold, but this was followed by the glad thought that they would soon be speeding north, homeward bound.

While the adults drew chairs near the centre of the broad balcony, the young people walked to the end, from where they could command a better view of the bay and also of San Lorenzo.

"Oh, those were happy days when we could row over there in the practice boats!" exclaimed Louis, pointing to the big island.

"Are not these days happy, sir?" asked Bella Caceras.

"Y-e-s," he stammered, somewhat confused.
"You know, I meant ——"

"Well, what did you mean?" she demanded laughingly.

"It was a different kind of happiness," said Harvey, coming to the rescue.

"You said that very prettily; didn't he, Rosita?"

"Yes, he did. But tell the honest truth, boys, where would you rather be — out in the bay, or talking with us here, on the veranda?"

"Here," replied Carl.

"So I say," Louis replied.

"And you, Harvey?"

"I would rather be out in the bay, and have you girls with us."

At this they all laughed heartily.

"Look, there's another ship coming to join the fleet!" exclaimed the youngest lad, pointing seaward; and they saw a seventh vessel farther out, heading toward the six that composed the blockading squadron.

"It was there that you were capsized, was it not?" asked Bella of Louis.

"Yes, just off the end of San Lorenzo, near where the *Blanco Encalada* is cruising. My! Carl, but that was an anxious evening! I don't believe I ever told you how frightened I was during the hours that we clung to the overturned cat-boat."

"No, and I never told you. I think we kept one another's courage up, don't you?"

"Yes I'm sure we did."

"Let's leave this place," said Harvey, "and go where the others are. It makes me homesick to look out over the bay."

"Why?" asked the girls.

"Because the ships are all gone. It's like going through a house where everybody is dead."

"Ugh! what a comparison!"

Captain Saunders was talking when they came near, and they drew up chairs and listened. He had been telling those near him of a lonely six months he had passed in Nicaragua, soon after the close of the war, when he had been compelled to remain in that country as an attaché to the United States legation.

"I had not been long married," he was saying, "and had left Mrs. Saunders and Carl in the States, for there was no steamship communication then, and the voyage to many parts of the Central American coast was made in sailing vessels. It was a very lonely life, there were few congenial spirits, and the one or two who were companionable were as homesick as I. On three occasions I was sorely tempted to go on board a steamer and sail for New York, and it is curious to note how old associations influenced me at such times."

“How was that?” inquired Don Isaac.

“The first,” said the captain, “occurred one hot afternoon while I was lying in a hammock under a cypress tree. It was a very oppressive day and I was endeavoring to sleep, when suddenly from somewhere came the notes of violin music. Somebody was playing, ‘Maryland, my Maryland.’ The air at once brought before my mind the two years I had passed at college in northern Ohio, for one of my old fraternity songs had been set to this music. I saw the fresh green campus, bordered with maples, the gray weather-stained dormitories, the red brick gymnasium, and before me passed one after another of my old college friends. An irresistible longing came to rise and hurry to the land where they lived, away from that land of strangers.”

“And the second time?” asked Señor Cisneros.

“Was one night while lying awake and tortured with fever I heard the strains of ‘Home, Sweet Home.’ Then came a picture of my wife and child, of the wooden house, opposite the Episcopal church, in the little village where I had left them. I could see the yard, the well-sweep, yes, and I could hear the wooden roller creak as the bucket was hauled from the cool depths; and in my longing I believe I called out for some of that cold, crystal water which I had drunk when a boy.”

"The third?"

"The third," said Captain Saunders, sitting upright, "was at Greytown, or San Juan del Norte, on a Christmas day. I was looking out into the bay when there rounded a cape and steamed in full view a ship of graceful lines, and I saw fluttering from her gaff ——"

"Oh, father!" interrupted Carl. "A man-of-war is coming into the harbor!"

They all jumped to their feet, and hastened to the end of the veranda.

"There," said the captain, "there's the picture I saw. Look! The stars and stripes! An American war-ship has arrived."

It was so. A cruiser, of graceful lines and tapering masts, was moving slowly over the passive waters of the bay, and streaming from her halyards was Old Glory. They watched her in silence as she steamed to a point opposite Chucuito, where the anchor was let go, and then the stillness of the afternoon was broken by the discharge of cannon as her forward guns fired a salute to the Peruvian flag that had been broken at the fore truck.

"That must be the *Pensacola*," said Harvey.

"Yes, and Brown is her captain," Captain Saunders exclaimed.

"Why has she come here, do you suppose?" asked Mr. Dartmoor.

“To take Americans and other foreigners to the north before a general bombardment is begun. Brown has probably received word that Chile contemplates aggressive action, and he has come to our rescue. Dartmoor, our overland journey need not be undertaken. We can sail north in an American man-of-war.”

A half hour later they left the hotel and went by the little train, some to Chucuito and others to Callao. While walking to the station, Bella Caceras, who had been very quiet ever since the advent of the *Pensacola*, stepped to Captain Saunders's side and said to him:—

“I'm so sorry. No, not exactly sorry, because I'm glad for your sake, but I'm sorry for ours.”

“Sorry about what, young lady?”

“That mamma and I cannot go to the United States.”

“But why can't you go?”

“You said, didn't you, that the war vessel would take away Americans and other foreigners? We are Peruvians.”

“Bless my heart!” ejaculated the captain, “if you look at old Brown only half as wistfully as you do at me, he will not only take you, but will surrender his cabin for your occupancy. Of course you will go, if any of us do. I promise that.”

Whereat Bella became happy again, and ran to the

side of her mother and father, to whom she told the good news.

That evening the American consul sent word to the members of the foreign colony that Captain Brown of the *Pensacola* would take all citizens of the United States on board the *Pensacola* on the morrow and carry them to Panama, and that he extended like invitations to other non-combatants who wished to escape from the beleaguered city.

"The word 'non-combatant' applies to you, Miss Bella," said Captain Saunders, smiling at the young Peruvian.

He was right. The commander of the cruiser was glad that he could grant passage to the friends of the Saunders and Dartmoors, and by three o'clock the next day those who had planned the overland trip were stowed away, bag and baggage, on the American man-of-war. As she steamed out of port an hour later, two persons waved good-bys from the Peruvian state barge, that had been pulled out into the harbor. One was General Matajente and the other Señor Cisneros.

The war-ship steamed near the *Blanco Encalada*, and through a speaking-trumpet Captain Brown thanked the admiral for permitting his entrance into the harbor. Then the course was shaped for the north.

At five o'clock the land was but a blue haze in

the distance. Carl, Louis, and Harvey stood at the stern rail and watched the fading outlines.

“Good-by, Peru,” said Carl, finally. “I suppose I shall never see you again.”

“Poor Peru !” exclaimed Louis. “She has been kind to us. I wonder what her future will be ?”

Harvey said nothing, but to him the shore line was even more dim than to the others, for a mist had formed in his eyes.

CHAPTER XXII.

DARK DAYS IN INCALAND.

THE exodus from Callao was none too soon. The day following the departure of the *Pensacola*, the Chilean ships steamed close in, and for forty-eight hours rained shot and shell into Callao. Houses were set on fire in many quarters, and had it not been for the non-combustible property of adobe, out of which nearly all buildings were constructed, the seaport would have been laid in ashes. As it was, some of the finest residences were riddled, and General Matajente learned with sorrow that the Dartmoor Row had been partly destroyed.

The castles, the Santa Rosa fort, the guns at Los Baños and those at La Punta, replied vigorously to the fire, striking the enemy repeatedly and ultimately driving them out of range. But the cruiser *Angamos*, armed with her powerful rifle, could stand out in the harbor where no shot could reach her, and throw shell after shell into the town. The screech of these missiles was heard night and day ; it became

horrible but familiar music, and men, yes even women, slept of nights while the projectiles were speeding on their way to give destruction and perhaps death at their journey's end.

August, September, and October of 1880 passed, and no move to the north was made by the Chilean land forces. Envoys from the United States had arrived in Callao, and others had gone on to Chile. They came with proposals of arbitration and the expression of hope that peace would ultimately result. They came instructed to do all in their power to settle the difficulties between the republics, and they also told Chile that she must not demand territory from Peru as the price of peace. While these negotiations were pending aggressive operations ceased, and although the blockade of Callao was maintained, there were no bombardments.

But Chile resented interference by the United States, and particularly the insistence that no territory should be demanded from Peru. For years she had had eyes fixed on the rich nitrate beds of the Tarapacá Province—the richest in the world, and finally the government of the southern republic announced that Peru and her ally, Bolivia, must yield this district or Chilean armies would march on Lima.

Protests were in vain. November brought the news that army corps were being mobilized in Val-

paraiso and in the captured city, Arica. Early in December came the information that three great divisions, numbering twenty-five thousand men in all, had embarked on transports and were sailing north. A week later a fleet of nearly fifty ships appeared off the Peruvian coast, a few miles south of Callao, and under cover of the guns of all the vessels of Chile's navy, men-of-war coming from the south and the others being withdrawn from blockade duty, this great force was landed.

Peru met the blow as best she could. Her army, which had deteriorated during the long inactivity, went into line with forebodings of disaster. The troops under the red, white, and red disputed every foot of ground between the capital and the sea, fighting fiercely at Chorillos, Miraflores, and San Juan, but they could not beat back the enemy; they were defeated and routed, and Christmas day saw the Chileans in Lima.

But the Peruvian army had not yet yielded, although the enemy had taken possession of the capital; the troops had withdrawn to the north, and from there they continued to wage war. Several attempts were made by the United States to bring about a peace, overtures to arbitrate were frequently advanced; but to all Chile turned a deaf ear, and insisted that the demands made in 1880, that the nitrate provinces be surrendered, must be met before the troops would be withdrawn.

For three years this desperate, one-sided struggle continued, and then Peru, compelled to purchase peace at any price or lose her individuality as a nation, made the best terms she could. Bolivia yielded all her rights on the seacoast, and Chile secured the port of Antofogasta forever. Peru yielded the province of Tarapacá, and by the final treaty, signed in 1884, she gave to Chile for a term of years the provinces of Arica and Tacna, it being agreed that in 1893 a vote of the people should be taken, to determine to what power they wished ultimately to belong.

Thus the land of the Incas emerged from its second overwhelming defeat—the first at the hands of Pizarro's forces; the second at the hands of the Chileans.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AN APPEAL TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THE dawn of the twentieth century found Peru recovering from the financial depression which had followed the war, but still far from the position which she had held before 1879. It also found her knocking at the door of the great republic of the north, and asking that a protecting arm be extended below the equator, and that certain promises made years before be fulfilled.

In the whirl that marked the last days of the nineteen-hundredth term, the land of the Incas had been lost temporarily from view. Peru's ancient enemy, Spain, had occupied the central position, and at the hands of the vigorous northern country had received even a more bitter defeat than that given her on the west coast of South America when the countries there had wrested their independence. The Philippine Islands had changed in their allegiance, so had Porto Rico, Guam, Tutuila, and Hawaii, and Cuba had become independent.

All these events had overshadowed that which had happened and was happening on the Western Hemisphere to the south. But when the clouds of conflict cleared away, there came into view a shade on the southern horizon that told of trouble there. Peru was seen gesturing and asking to be heard. Permission granted, this is what she said : —

“Twenty years ago we were at war with Chile, not through any fault of ours, but to save our southern provinces from being taken away from us. Several times during the early stages of that conflict we had opportunity to make honorable peace, and each time we were deterred because of the word that you sent us, to the effect that exorbitant terms made by the enemy should not be listened to, and that you, with your great force, would prevent any seizure of our territory. We listened and took heart. We continued the struggle and waited. Internal affairs withdrew your attention from us, and we were left to do the best that we could. The best proved the worst. Our richest lands were seized, and other land, almost as valuable, was taken for a number of years, upon a promise made that it would be returned. That promise has not been kept. We have paid Chile more indemnity than was paid by France after the Franco-German War, and still our southern neighbor insists upon the pound of flesh and demands complete cession of the provinces of Arica and Tacna in

addition to Tarapacá. Therefore, we appeal to you, to the United States of America, the mother of all republics, and ask that you insist that justice be done."

* * * * *

It was a beautiful afternoon in early spring of the year that was the most prosperous in United States history. A man of about thirty-six or seven years of age was hurrying along Pennsylvania Avenue, not looking carefully to his steps, nor minding how carriages might be approaching at street crossings, so occupied was he with his thoughts. He was warned by several coachmen and hailed by one or more bicyclists, while the driver of an automobile rang his gong loudly before he dodged from in front of the rubber-tired wheels. Finally he ran squarely into another man, and then came to a sudden stop, for he must needs beg pardon. But as he lifted his hat he caught sight of the person's face and exclaimed : —

"Carl Saunders !"

"Harvey Dartmoor !"

They grasped hands warmly. "Why, we have not met since we left the steamer at New York in 1880."

"That's so. More than twenty years ago. In many things it seems like yesterday and in others

a century. What are you doing in Washington, Carl?"

"I came on for a day, to attend to some business for father. And you, Harvey?"

"I live here. At least I have a home here, and pass half the time; the remainder of each year I am in Peru. In fact, I am returning the day after tomorrow. That reminds me, Carl, I have a very important engagement at the White House."

"With the President?"

"Yes, with the President. He has appointed two o'clock as the hour when I may see him, and it now lacks but five minutes of that time."

"Then I must not detain you. Come and see me when you have finished."

"I will. Where?"

Mr. Saunders named a hotel, and after a brief hand clasp they parted.

Ten minutes later, in the White House, a dignified, courtly gentleman asked the hurrying pedestrian of Pennsylvania Avenue to be seated, and then he said:—

"Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr. Dartmoor?"

"Yes, your Excellency."

"The Peruvian minister has spoken very highly of you, sir, as one of the leading business men of his country. He also informs me that you are a citizen

of the United States, and despite your love for the sub-equatorial country you have never forsworn your allegiance."

"I have not, sir ; nor shall I ever do so."

"That I am glad to hear. It should not be an easy matter for a citizen of this nation to relinquish the ties. And now, sir, what may I do for you?"

"I have called, your Excellency, to place before you briefly the conditions that exist in Peru, and the causes that have led to the present state of affairs, and to enlist your sympathy, if possible. I was a spectator of many events of the war that began in 1879, and, since then, half my time has been passed in Lima and in Callao. If you will grant me a few minutes of your valuable time, I will say in as few words as possible that which appeals to me as the meat of this momentous question."

"Proceed, sir."

"I thank you. I will not burden you with the events that led to the declaration of war, nor with an account of the war itself, for that is not germane, but I shall come at once to the time when the United States entered upon the scene.

"In 1880 President Hayes offered the mediation of the United States to the belligerents, and the same being accepted, conferences were held in Arica under the auspices of the representatives of the United States in Chile, Peru, and Bolivia, Thomas A.

Osborne, J. P. Christiancy, and General Charles Adams. Mr. Osborne declared, in his opening speech, that the independence of the United States was the origin of republican institutions in America, and that the United States considered themselves in a manner responsible for the existence of the institutions; that the independence of the South American republics was acknowledged, first of all, by the United States, and the stability of the institutions founded upon the independence, being put to a severe test by the war, he hoped the belligerent republics, impelled by the same wish that animated the United States, would endeavor, by every means in their power, to put an end to the war, by an honorable and lasting peace. To this Chile replied haughtily, that the province of Tarapacá must be ceded to her; and the first conference came to an end.

“On June 15, 1881, new ministers were chosen to represent the United States in the belligerent republics, General Stephen A. Hurlbut in Peru and General Judson Kilpatrick in Chile. To General Hurlbut, Secretary of State James G. Blaine gave the following instructions:—

“‘It will be difficult, perhaps, to obtain from Chile a relinquishment of claims to territory, but, as the Chilean Government has distinctly repudiated the idea that this war was a war of conquest, the Government of Peru may fairly claim the oppor-

tunity to make proposals of indemnity and guarantee before submitting to a cession of territory. If you can aid the Government of Peru in securing such a result, you will have rendered the service which seems most pressing.'

"On August 25, 1881, General Hurlbut said, in the course of his reception speech at Lima : —

"‘I wish to state further, that while the United States recognize all rights which the conqueror gains under the laws of civilized war, they do not approve of war for the purpose of territorial aggrandizement, nor of the violent dismemberment of a nation except as a last resort, in extreme emergencies.’

"But, your Excellency, the efforts of General Hurlbut and General Kilpatrick came to naught, and on November 1, 1881, Mr. William Henry Trescot was sent to Peru, Bolivia, and Chile, as a special envoy. To him, in the course of his instructions, Mr. Blaine said : —

"‘Already by force of its occupation, the Chilean Government has collected great sums from Peru ; and it has been openly and officially asserted in the Chilean Congress that these military impositions have furnished a surplus beyond the cost of maintaining its armies of occupation. The annexation of Tarapacá, which, under proper administration, would yield annually a sufficient sum to pay a large indemnity, seems to us inconsistent with the execution of justice.’

“Mr. Trescot’s mission failed as had the others, but, your Excellency, it did not fail through any fault of his : it failed because of the change in the policy at Washington. While this special envoy was absent upon his delicate mission, the assassination of President Garfield occurred and Mr. Arthur became President. With his advent there came into office a new Secretary of State, Mr. Frelinghuysen, who at once altered the policy of his predecessor, and Mr. Trescot’s instructions were changed by wire. In the meanwhile, your Excellency, Peru, not knowing of a change of heart at Washington, had continued the struggle, believing that this great country would continue upon the lines which it had laid down and not permit the seizure of territory by Chile. Not content with modifying Mr. Trescot’s instructions, Mr. Frelinghuysen recalled that gentleman to Washington. Fully appreciating the gravity of the situation, although he was no longer an envoy, Mr. Trescot, on June 5, 1882, wrote Mr. Frelinghuysen as follows :—

““If the United States intend to intervene effectively to prevent the disintegration of Peru, the time has come when that intention should be avowed. If it does not intend to do so, still more urgent is the necessity that Chile and Peru should understand exactly where the action of the United States ends. It would be entirely beyond my duty

to discuss the character of the consequences of either line of conduct ; but I trust that you will not deem that I am going beyond that duty in impressing upon the government that the present position of the United States is an embarrassment to all the belligerents, and that it should be terminated as promptly as possible.'

"Two weeks later, your Excellency, newly accredited envoys were sent to Peru and Chile, Dr. Cornelius A. Logan to the latter nation and Mr. James R. Partridge to Peru. The instructions of these gentlemen, your Excellency, were no longer declarative that Chile had no moral right to demand territory of Peru, but they contained the recommendation that Peru be urged to make the best terms possible, in order that the war might be brought to an end.

"Mr. President, the good offices of the United States produced the sole effect of encouraging Peru in her resistance, confident, as she was, of their efficacy, thus greatly aggravating the condition of the vanquished nation, only to find herself forsaken in the end and defenceless in the hands of her implacable enemy. In this regard, Mr. President, I should like to repeat the words of Mr. Hurlbut. In his official note to Mr. Blaine, dated Lima, October 26, 1881, he wrote :—

"‘If the United States, after denying to these

people every application for aid from any European state, shall themselves refuse any help in their desperate situation, it would seem to be almost a breach of national faith. I myself am a profound believer in the right and duty of the United States to control the political questions of this continent, to the exclusion of any and all European dictation. This I understand to be the opinion held also by the American people and to have been asserted by Congress. This I also understand to be the doctrine of the administration which sent me to this place.”

The President was silent for several minutes after Mr. Dartmoor had finished, then he said:—

“You have placed the matter before me very concisely, sir. I am of course familiar with the details, but I never had my attention called to them in such a brief yet forceful manner.”

“Thank you, your Excellency,” said Mr. Dartmoor.

“Your position,” continued the President, “is that the United States, by interfering in the Chile-Peruvian War, gave the last-named nation undue encouragement, and because of a change in policy, failed to impress Chile with the firmness of its position. Because of this, you believe the United States should now interfere and prevent Chile’s retention of the provinces of Arica and Tacna?”

“Yes, your Excellency.”

“Mr. Dartmoor, I will place the matter before Congress with the recommendation which you have urged.”

He rose from his seat, and the conference was at an end.

Harvey left the White House very much pleased with the result of his call, and hurried to the hotel where he had promised to meet his old friend, Carl Saunders; and arrived there, he related in detail the conversation with the President, and received the congratulations of his chum of the Callao Rowing Club days. Then they fell to discussing events that had occurred those many years ago, and talked of the persons they had then known. Both heard with relief that all members of the two families who had been so intimately associated were living. Carl was delighted to learn that General Matajente was high in favor with the government, and as belligerent as ever, notwithstanding his advanced years.

“And John Longmore?” he asked.

“Poor fellow! he died in an insane asylum.”

“How is Señor Cisneros?”

“He is very well, and is resident manager of the mine.”

“That’s so, the mine! I forgot to ask about that. Then it has paid?”

“Yes, it has paid beyond our expectations, and has made us all wealthy, so far as worldly goods are

concerned. But what are we doing here? I wish to have you visit me at my home."

"I should be delighted. Is it far?"

"No; on Q street. Come. Rosita, who is visiting me, will be delighted to see you."

On the way Carl asked if Harvey had ever heard of their esteemed friend, Don Isaac Lawton.

"Why, yes; he is in Jamaica, and is in good circumstances."

They soon entered one of those large, elegantly furnished residences for which Washington is famous, and after closing the door Harvey called out:—

"Rosita, here is an old friend from Callao!"

A tall, handsome woman soon appeared, and grasped the visitor's hand cordially. She was followed into the room by one who was not so tall, but even more beautiful and graceful.

"This is my wife, Carl. But, how stupid! Why, you know her!"

"Know her? Know Bella Caceras? I should say so!"

At the dinner table the guest remarked a curious ornament on the wall.

"Did I never tell you its history?" Harvey asked.

"To be sure I did. It's the Majerona arrow."

"And the pincushion?" asked Carl.

"I still carry that in my pocket."

VOCABULARY.

PRONUNCIATION. — ā, ē, i, ō, as in fate, mete, site, rope ; ä, ě, ĭ, ǫ, as in hat, met, bit, not ; ä, ě, ĭ, ǫ, as in far, her, fir, nor ; ěĕ, as in feet ; ôô as in hoot.

Alma Perdida, Äl'-mä Pär-dēē'-dä.

Almirante, Äl-mē-rän'-tē.

Antofogasta, An-tō-fō-gäs'-tä.

Arica, Ä-rēē'-cä.

Arroba, Ä-rō'-bä.

Atahualpa, Ä-tä-wäl'-pä.

Ayuli, Ä-yôô'-ly.

Baños, Bän'-yōs.

Bella, Bē'-yä.

Blanco Encalada, Blän'-cō Ēn-cä-lä'-dä.

Bola, Bō'-läw.

Caceras, Käs'-ä-räs.

Cajamaraca, Kä-hä-mä-rä'-cä.

Callao, Käl-yōw'.

Cerro de Pasco, Sär'-rō dā Päs'-kō.

Chicla, Chēēk'-lä.

Chile, Chēē'-lä.

Chirimoya, Chēē-rēē-möy'-yä.

Chosica, Chō-sēē'-cä.

Chucuito, Chôô-quēē'-tō.

Cinchona, Sēēn-kō'-nä.

Cisneros, Cēēs-nē'-rōs.

Cordillera, Cōr-dēēl-yä'-rä.

Covodonga, Kō-vō-dōn'-gä.

Grau, Gräw.

Huari, Whä'-rēē.

Huascar, Wäs'-cär.

Independencia, In-dä-pēn-dēn'-cēē-ä.

Iquique, Ēē-kēē'-kä.

Islay, Ēēs-lī'.

Jivaro, Hēē-vä'-rō.

La Punta, Lā Pôôn'-tä.

Lima, Lēē'-mä.

Llama, Yä'-mä.

Logroño, Lō-grōn'-yō.

Majerona, Mä-hä-rō'-nä.

Manco Capac, Män'-cō Kä-päc'.

Marañon, Mä-rän-yōn'.

Matajente, Mä-tä-gēn'-tä.

Matucana, Mä-tôô-kän'-ä.

Mirgoso, Mēēr-gō'-sō.

Mutista Acuminata, Mu-tēē'-sēē-ä Ä-q-mēē-nä'-tä.

Oroya, Ō-rōw'-yä.

Palo de Sangre, Pä'-lō dā Sän'-grä.

Pedro, Pä'-drō.

Peru, Pä-rôô'.

Peso, Pä'-sō.

Pilcomayo, Pēēl-cō-mī -yō.

Prado, Prä'-dō.

Rimac, Rēē'-mäck.

Rosita, Rō-sēē'-tä.

Señor, Sēn-yōr.

Señora, Sēn-yō'-rä.

Señorita, Sēn-yō-rēē-tä.

Taruco, Tä-ru'-kō.

Ucalayli, U-cä-lä'-lēē.

Valparaiso, Väl-pä-rī'-sō.

Vista, Vēēs'-tä.

Yucahualpa, W-kä-whäl'-pä.

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